

acquired of husband

ally (AP) — stabbed her in front of her is free she dropped the knife. The woman, who was suffering from a drug addiction, was taken to a hospital. She was later released on bail.

a to pay blind victims

A California jury found a woman liable for the license of a car that ran down a man and his wife. The couple was killed in a head-on collision with a car driven by the woman. The jury awarded the couple's estate \$4.1 million in damages.

a affair Charles

R) — Prince Charles and his wife, Diana, were seen together at a party in London. The couple had been separated for several months. The party was held at a private club and was attended by many celebrities.

Saudis to stretch out \$9.2b in payments

WASHINGTON (R) — Saudi Arabia and the United States have signed an agreement under which the cash-strapped Saudis will stretch out \$9.2 billion in arms payments to five major U.S. firms, defense officials said Monday. The deal signed Saturday could also clear the financial road for a reported plan by the Saudis to buy \$6 billion in commercial airliners from Boeing Co and McDonnell Douglas Corp. The defense officials, who asked not to be identified, said the restructuring deal was signed by officials of the two governments and of McDonnell Douglas Corp., Raytheon Co., General Dynamics Corp., FMC Corp. and General Motors Corp. The \$9.2 billion in payments previously scheduled over the next two years are part of some \$30 billion in American weapons the Saudis have agreed to buy. The defense officials said the plan will allow Saudi Arabia, which has been hit by declining oil prices, to stretch out payments for jets, missiles, tanks, armoured troop carriers and other arms without cancelling planned purchases. The deal chiefly affects a \$9 billion deal by the Saudis to buy 72 McDonnell F-15 fighters.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordanian Foundation
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Arabs' food gap widening — official

DAMASCUS (R) — The Arab World, once self-sufficient in food, now has an import bill of \$16 billion a year, a senior agricultural official said Monday, urging unified action to stop the food gap widening. Yahya Bakour, director-general of the Khartoum-based Arab Organisation of Agricultural Development (AOAD), told Reuters in an interview that Arab countries who enjoyed self-sufficiency until the 1970s owned all the resources to do it again. Arabs needed to form an economic alliance, he said, but this should be kept separate from political disputes and governmental bodies to give the private sector a leading role, benefits and costs should be shared by everybody. The rise in food imports resulted from an increase in the Arab World's population to around 225 million with a growth rate of 2.8 per cent and a decline in agricultural production. He said Arabs' investment in agriculture in the 1980-1985 period fell to around 9.1 per cent of total investment from about 14 per cent 10 years earlier. The share of agricultural investment directed by the joint Arab development funds did not exceed 2.5 per cent.

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Lawzi returns

AMMAN (Petra) — Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi and an accompanying delegation returned home Monday after a week-long official visit to South Africa during which he delivered messages from His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, in South African President F.W. de Klerk and African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela. The delegation also met with South African officials, spiritual leaders and representatives of public and private institutions for talks on enhancing bilateral relations. Mr. Lawzi described the visit as successful, saying South African officials view Jordan as a friendly country which has a key role in the Middle East. He said South Africa also welcomed the opening of a Jordanian embassy in Johannesburg and considers this as an important means to enhance relations. Mr. Lawzi was accompanied by a delegation, including Planning Minister Ziad Fariz, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan, and other senior officials.

Iraqi dinar plunges

BAGHDAD (AFP) — The Iraqi dinar plunged below 200 to the dollar on the black market Monday, its lowest rate ever, causing prices of basic goods to skyrocket. Individual moneychangers set rates as low as 220 dinars to the dollar, compared with an official rate of 3.2 to the dollar. They ignored a ban on foreign currency trading by street dealers announced Thursday by the deputy governor of the central bank. Prices of basic commodities have shot up by 60 to 80 per cent, on average in the past few days.

More rain and snow expected

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Meteorology Department expects more rain to fall over the Kingdom Tuesday as the effect of a cold air mass accompanying a depression centred over Cyprus continues. Nabeel Kafaween of the department told the Jordan Times that snow was also expected to fall on mountains with an elevation of more than 1,100 metres above sea level. Mr. Kafaween said it would remain to be cold, cloudy and rainy throughout Tuesday. In the evening, he said, the effect of the cold air mass will decrease as the depression moves northward. Still, the Kingdom will remain under the effect of the accompanying cold air mass which will cause windy weather till Friday, he said. He said frost formation was expected in various parts of the Kingdom on Thursday and Friday, adding it would become warmer on Saturday as winds turn easterly.

Frozen Libyan assets in U.S. worth \$1b

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Frozen Libyan assets in the United States are worth nearly \$1 billion, a U.S. envoy to the United Nations said Monday. U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative Edward Walker made the estimate in a letter to the U.N. Security Council's Sanctions Committee. They were frozen in retaliation for Libya's refusal to extradite intelligence agents wanted in connection with the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am Boeing 747 over Scotland and Libyans suspected in the 1989 downing of a UTA airliner over Niger.

Fed may raise interest rates

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said Monday that the U.S. central bank will begin pushing up interest rates "at some point" to forestall a reappearance of inflation. While there have been no signs of inflation making a comeback, Mr. Greenspan said in congressional testimony that the Fed would keep a close eye on the economy to preserve the financial markets' confidence.

Breakthrough predicted in autonomy negotiations

Rabin reviews Peres-Arafat document; Sunday's Cairo talks could produce deal

Combined agency dispatches

PALESTINIAN and Israeli officials predicted a breakthrough in Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) talks on Monday as Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin reviewed a draft of an agreement drawn up in Davos, Switzerland.

"There is a breakthrough, in that the engines will be on, and the first stage will be on," Housing Minister Binyamin Ben Eliezer told reporters after a cabinet meeting, where ministers received copies of the draft agreement.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat met in the ski resort of Davos to take up sensitive issues that have prevented implementation of the accord that was signed on Sept. 13 last year.

"We cannot speak about an

agreement. We can speak about a step forward towards an agreement," Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin told Reuters.

Israeli and Palestinian officials said they hoped to bridge the gap in time for a meeting in Cairo in seven days' time.

"I hope that in the coming days it will be possible to create such a situation in which it will be easier to conclude possibly the agreement about the main three obstacles in Cairo in a week or two," Mr. Beilin said.

He cited as obstacles the control of border crossings over the Jordan River to Jericho, the size of the Jericho area to be administered by Palestinians and security for Jewish settlers in the Gaza Strip.

"We are speaking about technicalities actually. We are speaking about very small de-

tails which are very important. Generally speaking of course this is the question of symbolism for the PLO and security for us and the compromises that should be done on this basis," he said.

An Israeli official who took part in the Davos talks said upon his return the sides were still "a long way" from an agreement.

"There is still a long way to go," Environment Minister Yossi Sarid told Israel Television.

"I think the Davos meeting was the most important round of talks lately but we have not overcome all the differences."

Palestinian negotiator Nabil Shaath said Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres will meet in Cairo Sunday.

Dr. Shaath, returning to Egypt from Davos, told reporters he would meet Israeli officials on Tuesday to start prepa-

ratins for the Sunday meeting.

Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres would meet in Cairo on Monday under the auspices of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Foreign Minister Amr Musa who had played a major role in backing the peace process, Dr. Shaath said.

"If we reach solution in the disputes at the Sunday meeting then we will have passed the phase of differences and arrived at stage of signature," Dr. Shaath said.

He said Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres had made progress at their weekend meetings in Switzerland.

"I believe we have achieved progress regarding problems which have been stalled for a long time in Gaza and Jericho," he said.

(Continued on page 10)

Beirut says headway made in hunt of Maaytah's killers

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Investigators hunting for the killers of Jordanian diplomat Nabeel Maaytah are hopeful of making arrests after witnesses provided descriptions and other information, Interior Minister Beshara Mirhaj said on Monday.

A gunman shot dead Mr. Maaytah, the Jordanian embassy's first secretary, outside his Beirut home on Saturday, and seized documents from his briefcase.

The police department Monday circulated identikit pictures of two suspects in the assassination of the Jordanian diplomat, the first foreign envoy killed in Beirut since the end of the civil war in 1990.

Police artists had drawn the sketches on the strength of information obtained from 11 witnesses interviewed by examining magistrate Saeed Mirza.

Police officials said the sketches were distributed to all security agencies in the country as well as border checkpoints and air and sea ports. The

pictures, however, were not made available to the media.

Interior Minister Mirhaj reported some headway in the investigation into the assassination, saying investigators have "uncovered important clues that could lead to the culprits and their motive."

Mr. Mirhaj was quoted by several Beirut radio stations as saying that investigators were able to establish the rough features of the suspects thanks to the eyewitnesses interrogated. He did not elaborate.

About 40 policemen armed with assault rifles took up positions Sunday outside the Jordanian embassy in the Sakiet Janzeer residential district. Security also was beefed up at the residence of the ambassador and other embassy staff.

No one has claimed responsibility for the assassination, but suspicion focused on extremists opposed to the Middle East peace process.

Beirut's prosecutor general, Fawzi Abu Murad, told reporters Monday he would demand

the death penalty for the killer and his accomplice.

A foreign ministry delegation flew to Amman Monday to brief officials on the outcome of the investigation (see page 3).

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said the attackers probably took a document of little importance from Mr. Maaytah's Mercedes. The spokesman said the paper was a routine bulletin from the embassy to be sent to the ministry in Amman and for circulation at all missions.

But eyewitnesses interviewed after the attack said they doubted anything had been removed from the car.

A purse zipped shut was found next to Mr. Maaytah's body. A briefcase in the car appeared untouched.

Mr. Maaytah was carrying a review of the Lebanese press to Ambassador Fakhr Abu Taleb and was then planning on going to Damascus to meet a Jordanian colleague in the Syrian capital when he was killed, a Lebanese official said.

Marines kill 5 Somalis

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — U.S. Marines killed at least five Somalis, including women, and wounded 15 others Monday in the bloodiest clash in Mogadishu since a ceasefire was declared in October by Somali militiamen fighting U.N. forces.

Somali gunmen shot at a diplomatic convoy here Monday, U.S. Charge d'Affaires Stevenson McIlvaine said. The subsequent firefight lasted for between one and two minutes.

Three Somalis, including two women, died on the spot. Reporters also saw the body of a man whose arm was blown off when the American troops opened fire with heavy weapons.

Two more Somalis died after the clash in south Mogadishu's Agfoi Road, medical staff said at the Benaadir and Digfer hospitals, which respectively took in eight and seven injured people.

Somali sources said eight Somalis were killed and 13 wounded, including women and children.

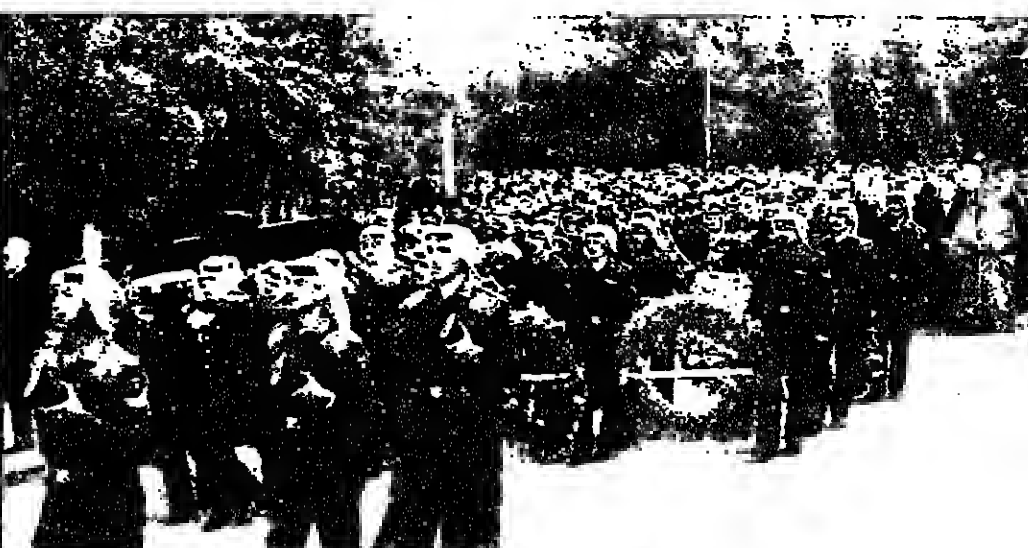
The incident on the crowded road to the airport, near the hotel used by journalists at the "Kilometre Four" circle, came as Saudi U.N. troops were handing out food close by.

"It all happened very fast," the Bangladesh major in charge of guarding the K-4 junction, Kajigul Haidar, said. "It's impossible to tell where the first shots came from."

A U.S. spokesman said the Marines shot after the convoy was fired on by at least two Somali gunmen. Somali witnesses said no one shot at the Americans and speculated the Marines fired because they believed several hundred Somalis in the street outside the food centre were trying to block the convoy.

U.S. officials said the convoy of three Humvees and two cars carrying two American diplomats was on its way to meet with representatives of clan leader Mohammad Farah Aided's coalition.

Mr. McIlvaine, said the 22 Marines in the convoy reported they were fired on around 11 a.m. by at least two Somali gunmen, one from the bush and another from outside a building. He said they believed they hit two gunmen.



A scene from the funeral Monday of the late prime minister, Bahjat Talhouni

Talhouni laid to rest; King pays tribute to his service

AMMAN (J.T.) — Former Prime Minister Bahjat Talhouni was laid to rest Monday in a ceremony attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Royal family members, politicians and senior officials.

His Majesty King Hussein Monday sent a cable to Upper House of Parliament (Senate) Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi condoling him over the death of Mr. Talhouni, who was a senator at the time of his death.

"I send to the dear Senate speaker and all the members of the Upper House... my feelings of confidence, love and appreciation, hoping that all would accept my warmest condolences and consolation as we all share the sorrow over the loss of former Prime Minister Bahjat Al Talhouni," the King

said. "His memory will always be on our minds when we remember the various stages in Jordan's life and his achievements and true belonging. Maybe the pioneering civil law which was founded on the principles of Islamic Sharia and which was fruit of the collaboration of the best of scholars... will be linked to the efforts he exerted to bring it into existence," the King said.

Mr. Talhouni, who headed seven cabinets between 1958 and 1970 and served as chief of the royal court, died Sunday of natural causes at age 80.

The ex-premier was considered one of the architects of modern Jordan who consolidated the Kingdom's relations with other Arab countries during the 1950s and 60s.

Mr. Talhouni was laid to rest after mourners prayed for his soul at the Royal Cemetery mosque.

The Regent joined the Talhouni family in receiving condolences at the cemetery from members of the Royal family, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Lower House of Parliament Speaker Taher Al Masri, members of the Upper and Lower House of Parliament, former prime ministers, government officials, senior army officers, members of diplomatic missions and a large number of citizens.

Prince Hassan and the Talhouni family members also received the condolences of a delegation representing the Syrian People's Assembly, which has also participated in the funeral procession.

Settlers escalate campaign

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Jewish hardliners opposed to Palestinian autonomy vowed Monday to press on with a campaign to create a rash of illegal settlements despite an army crackdown.

Troops arrested 30 members of the "Zou Hartzenuor" (this is our country) group on Sunday after they set up tents near the Karnel Shomron settlement in the north of the occupied West Bank.

Soldiers and policeman had surrounded a hill where 100 settlers set up the camp.

The army declared the area a closed military zone and arrested the Jewish activists who refused to leave.

A court in Tiberias will decide Tuesday whether to keep them in custody.

Police chief Rafi Peled has strongly criticised the settlers, accusing them of creating extra-work for his men and threatening to make "mass arrests."

But a Zou Hartzenuor activist said, "we intend to press on with our action and we would rather go to jail than give a signed promise not to offend again."

The radical group has pressed ahead with a campaign first suggested by the council of Jewish communities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to double the number of settlements in protest at the Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord for limited Palestinian autonomy.

The council abandoned the plan "for fear of going against Israeli public opinion," spokesman Shai Bazak told AFP on Monday.

"These are good people with good intentions," Mr. Bazak said of Zou Hartzenuor. "But we prefer not to take part in illegal activities."

Police and the army have deployed reinforcements in the West Bank since the operation was launched last Wednesday, when troops evicted 50 settlers, who occupied an empty house outside the Kyriat Arba settlement, near Hebron.

Awni Bilal interred with full honours

AMMAN (J.T.) — Royal Jordanian Air Force chief Major-General Awni Bilal, who died last week while on a visit to Washington, was buried Monday at the Royal Cemetery in Amman.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, royal family members and government and military officials attended the ceremony.

Gen. Bilal, 55, was in Washington to attend a meeting of a joint Jordanian-American military commission. He died of a heart attack Thursday.

A U.S. military plane flew his body to Amman Sunday.

Gen. Bilal served in the Royal Jordanian Air Force command for 17 years. Known for his flying skills, he became

chief of the command one year ago.

He is survived by his wife and three children.

The funeral proceeded from the King Hussein Medical Centre in the Royal Cemetery where the body was laid to rest with full military honours.

The Regent, along with the Bilal family members, received condolences.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Cabinet ministers, member of the Lower House and Upper House of Parliament, senior officials of high-ranking army officers as well as the commander and the officers of the Palestine Liberation Army contingent in Jordan and military attaches at the Arab and foreign embassies in Amman attended the funeral.

ANZ Grindlays Bank

Chief executive ANZ Bank reaffirms commitment to Jordan

AMMAN — Dan Mercer, the chief executive of Australia and New Zealand Banking Group, will be visiting Jordan on Feb. 8-11, 1994, as part of a tour of the bank's operations in the Middle East.

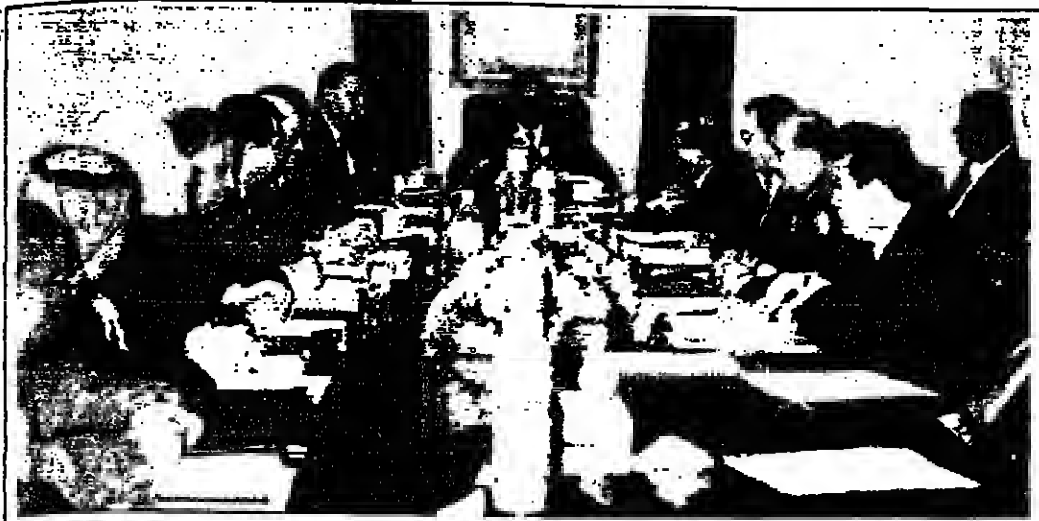
The group's commercial banking presence in Jordan and the rest of the Middle East, operated through ANZ Grindlays Bank, is well established and contributes strongly to the bank's financial performance. Mr. Mercer's visit demonstrates ANZ's commitment to the market.

David R. Smith, regional general manager, Middle East said: "ANZ Grindlays has an excellent knowledge of the local business market and has been established in Jordan for nearly 70 years through its 14 branch network. Mr. Mercer's meeting will give him the opportunity to learn more about the economic development of the country and our Middle East operations. He will also meet with senior government offi-



Don Mercer, chief executive of ANZ Bank, with members of the bank's staff.

Australia and New Zealand Banking Group is one of Australia's leading banks and features among the world's top 100 banks. It has a strong international representation with over 2,100 points of representation in over 40 countries. Total assets exceed Australian dollars (AUD) 99 billion and operating profits for the year to Sept. 30, 1993, exceeded AUD 450 million.



PUBLIC SAFETY: Minister of Interior Salameh Hammad Monday chairs a preparatory meeting for a national conference on public safety, which he announced has been tentatively scheduled for Feb. 8 through Feb. 10 under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent. Conference delegates will comprise experienced representatives of concerned public and private institutions, said the minister. The conference preparatory committee, which met Monday, reviewed several working papers submitted by ministries, the Public Security Department (PSD), the Jordanian Armed Forces, the Civil Defence Department (CDD), the Ports Corporation, the Free Zones Corporation, the Aqaba Regional Authority, professional associations and voluntary societies. Working papers called among other things for drawing up an integrated national plan to ensure public safety, stressing the importance of coordination among the various parties especially during major fires, natural disasters and extraordinary circumstances, according to a statement after the meeting (Petra photo).

Democracy gives Jordanians feeling of security — Al Masri

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Taher Al Masri Monday said the orientation towards democracy has created a relaxed atmosphere and a feeling of security and peace of mind among the Jordanian people, and it has helped to reflect the true civilised image of Jordan and its people.

In an address at the opening of a seminar entitled "Democracy in Jordan: Concepts and Practice," and prepared by the National Society for the Enhancement of Freedom and Democracy as its first activity, Mr. Masri said society aims at spreading the concepts of democracy in the heart of Jordanian society in various fields.

He added that the society, which groups politicians, academicians, journalists and other activists will try to help various sectors of society to benefit from democracy in the best possible manner.

At the one-day seminar, held in cooperation with and support from the Friedrich Naumann Foundation of Germany, foundation representative Walter Ruedel told the opening session that the society's work can be enhanced through the participation of the largest number of individuals and social, cultural and political groups.

Enhancing democracy provides the best guarantee for ensuring the freedoms of individuals, the protection of personal property and the appropriate application of laws

equally among members of society, said Mr. Ruedel.

Working papers presented at the seminar included: Taher Kanaan's on the concepts of democracy; Mohammad Masalha's on political pluralism; Asma Khader's on the status of women in Jordan and their contribution to society; and Ishaq Al Farhan's on advocating the role of Islamists in Jordan's democracy and reviewing the Islamists political action in general.

Society Vice President Salah Jarrar said his organisation aims to apply the provisions of the Jordanian Constitution and the National Charter, as well as the principles of democracy, freedom and equality to guarantee human, political and social rights.

Jordan asks for help in implementing its national environment strategy

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan has made a request to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to help it carry out the Kingdom's National Strategy on the Environment.

In an announcement Monday, Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Ahmad Akaleh said that the assistance was requested during an IUCN-organised 10-day meeting in Buenos Aires to discuss ways of protecting the earth's environment.

As head of the Jordanian delegation to the meeting, which opened on Jan. 17, the minister said he also discussed with IUCN officials the prospects of obtaining financing for the creation of a maritime reserve in Aqaba and for protecting the environment in the Jordan Valley where the "white fly" pest was causing severe damage to crops.

Mr. Akaleh, who returned to Amman Monday, said the white fly problem is also spreading in Europe and the pests infest greenhouses crops as well, adding that the problem is of concern to the IUCN.

The Jordanian delegation to the meeting presented an outline of the general environment in the Kingdom and said that measures were under way to protect it from pollution, according to the minister.

He said the National Strategy on the Environment, which was declared by His Majesty King Hussein in 1992, and the new draft law on the environment, which entails the creation of a higher council to work on environmental protection, were conveyed to the IUCN general assembly meeting which ended on Jan. 27.

Jordan has offered to host a regional office for the IUCN in Amman to help boost services to the region, according to Mr. Akaleh.

He said the delegation received promises that these requests would be seriously considered by the IUCN board.

More than 3,000 delegates from 64 member nations attended the meeting, including representatives from 16 Arab countries, Mr. Akaleh said.

The Switzerland-based IUCN, which was founded in 1948, assisted Jordan in formulating its environment strategy.

House to meet on food, medicine issue

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament is scheduled to hold a special session Wednesday to discuss allegations by Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas that a significant quantity of food and medicine in the market does not meet required standards.

The Lower House is also expected to hear several proposals by deputies concerning public services in various governorates and a report by the House Finance Committee on the financial protocol between Jordan and France in 1993.

Meanwhile Monday the House Public Freedoms Committee held a meeting and heard statements by the presidents of the Jordanian medical and pharmacists associations, as well as the director of Al Amal and the Islamic and Jordan University hospitals.

Present at the meeting were the directors of the Drug Control Department at the Ministry of Health.

Discussion covered food and medicine situation at their departments in the light of Dr. Malhas' allegations.

Also Monday the House Agriculture Committee met to discuss the Kingdom's general agricultural policies.

The committee focused its attention on the water usage in irrigation and the need to provide more water to irrigation works for strategic agricultural products such as cereals.

The committee members stressed the need for the country to do all it can to ensure food security, agricultural inputs and other requirements at reasonable prices.

Lebanese delegation arrives to offer condolences to Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday received a Lebanese foreign ministry delegation who arrived in Amman earlier in the day to offer condolences to Jordan on the death of Nayeb Maaytah, the Jordanian diplomat who was assassinated in Beirut Saturday.

The delegation, led by Zafer Al Hassan, secretary general of Lebanon's foreign ministry, voiced his country's condemnation of the assassination and stressed that the Lebanese authorities were diligently searching for the assassins.

Mr. Al Hassan said Lebanon was willing to cooperate with the Jordanian authorities to determine the identity of the assassins.

Dr. Majali told Parliament Sunday that he had asked the Lebanese government to inform Jordan of the results of all investigations in the assassination of the 42-year-old diplomat.

"We have also asked that a Jordanian team take part in those investigations," said Dr. Majali.

Acting Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Fawaz Abul Ghanam met with the Lebanese delegation to discuss the investigations.

Mr. Al Hassan told Mr. Abul Ghanam that the crime was also directed against Lebanon's security and stability and that his country was seeking cooperation with Jordan to find the perpetrators as soon as possible.

Upon the delegation's arrival in Amman, Mr. Al Hassan said that the Lebanese people were deeply pained at the death of the Jordanian envoy.



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday receives the secretary general of the Lebanese foreign ministry, Zafer Al Hassan, and an accompanying delegation who arrived in Amman to offer condolences on the death of Nayeb Maaytah (Petra photo).

"We how our heads in respect to the Martyr, Nayeb Maaytah, who had offered so much and worked in the service of his country and the Arab Nation," said Mr. Al Hassan in an arrival statement.

In reply to a question, Mr. Al Hassan said that the motives behind the assassination were still unknown but the manner in which the assassination was committed clearly indicated that the crime was premeditated.

He added, however, that the Lebanese authorities cannot cause any party for the crime since investigations into the case were continuing.

Meanwhile, political organisations, unions and societies continued to issue statements strongly condemning the killing of Mr. Maaytah who was brought home Sunday and laid to rest in his hometown near Karak.

Personal feud may be behind movie-house blast — sources

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Police are pursuing a theory that a personal feud was behind the explosion last week at a downtown movie theatre which injured at least seven people, informed sources said Monday.

However, they said, the possibility remains open that Wednesday's blast at the Rivoli movie-house could have been the work of someone who objected to the nature of the films that the theatre was showing.

The movie house is known for screening films bordering on pornography in violation of Jordanian censorship regulations and was a favourite haunt of unemployed youth, mostly from the Arab expatriate community.

"There are some leads that a personal dispute could be behind the blast, but they need closer follow-up," said one of the sources.

The source declined to elaborate. But inquiries in the vicinity of the Rivoli indicated that several quarrels involving some of the employees of the movie house had taken place some weeks ago and the blast could have been the work of an individual or group as an act of revenge.

The nature of the explosive device, described as a crude,

"homemade" incendiary bomb, lacking any sophistication that is expected of an organised group, strengthened the theory that it was an isolated incident.

At the same time, according to the sources, devices of similar nature had also been discovered at other places in the past, including liquor stores. This pointed the finger in the direction of religious elements who oppose what they consider to be socially and culturally improper for the conservative Jordanian society.

An explosion more than a year ago at a cinema in the Baqaa refugee camp was at that time reported to have been caused by a planted "homemade" bomb. Police, however, said a gas cylinder had exploded in the cafeteria of the movie house.

Meanwhile, police continued to keep a tight lid on the results of their investigations into the downtown explosion.

"When we solve the case, we will have a statement for you," said a police official.

Most of the injured, two Jordanians, three Egyptians and two Sudanese, have left hospital after treatment.

At least one of them, described to be seriously wounded, has been pronounced out of danger, but remains in hospital.

According to downtown sources, several others could also have been injured, but they did not remain at the site of explosion to get treatment.

"Do you expect anyone to volunteer himself and testify as someone who was watching an indecent movie?" asked a salesperson at a nearby electrical shop who said he saw dozens rushing out of the movie house after the blast but were missing when it came to giving information to investigators.

The Islamic Action Front (IAF), Jordan's best organised political party, issued a statement through its deputies in the Lower House condemning the explosion and suggested that "Zionists... and enemy groups" could have been behind it.

In a clear reference to the nature of the movies that the Rivoli is known to have been screening, the party also said that violence was not the means to prevent anyone from actions incompatible with Islamic teachings.

"Correcting the status of cinemas in the country cannot be done through this condemned act that threatens the country and the citizens, but through raising public awareness and activating legislation and censorship on what cinemas and other media means broadcast," the statement added.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

New political party licensed

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Interior Monday granted legal status to the Constitutional Jordanian Arab Front Party, making it the 22nd Jordanian party to be legalised. The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Monday reported that the Ministry informed the secretary general of the party, Milhem Tell, of its decision. The party's constituent assembly last month authorised Mr. Tell along with members Ahmad Al Awaish, Shaher Al Rawasbdeh, Ali Al Talah and Mohammad Hatab to apply for licensing. The party, which is almost exclusively made up of former adherents to the Syrian Baath Party, joins four other political parties on the pan-Arab spectrum. These parties are the Jordan Socialist Baath Party, the Progressive Arab Baath Party, the Jordan Arab Democratic Party and the most recently licensed National Action Front Party. The party's leader, Mr. Tell, ran for a Muslim seat in Amman's Third District in the 1989 parliamentary elections. During his campaign, he openly advocated Jordan's union with Syria.

Team returns from Pakistan with contracts

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation led by Sameh Madani, director general of the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) returned to Amman Monday after a several day visit to Pakistan. Mr. Madani said that the delegation held talks with Pakistani government officials on the prospects of increasing the volume of trade between the two countries. According to Mr. Madani, Pakistan imports 200,000 tonnes of Jordanian phosphate annually, but the delegation has concluded contracts for the purchase of an additional 100,000 tonnes of ammonium phosphate, and there was a possibility for increasing this amount to 250,000 tonnes annually in the near future.

Fire damages fabric store

AMMAN (Petra) — A fire Monday swept through a retail fabric store in downtown

Amman, causing material damage but no casualties. A spokesman for the Civil Defence Department (CDD), which was involved in extinguishing the fire, said that the fire was caused by sparks from welding works in the neighbouring store.

Postal team attends Geneva meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan took part in the round table meetings of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) held in Geneva. Secretary General of the Ministry of Communications and Postal Affairs Abdullah Al Jazi said the Jordan delegation presented proposals concerning the distribution of mail, and assistance to Jordan and other developing nations. According to Mr. Jazi, Jordan receives nearly \$1 million in compensation for expenses incurred in handling incoming mail from various countries. He said that the sum will now be increased by at least 20 per cent.

Family planning group plans workshop

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian Family Planning Society will hold a workshop Sunday for 20 women involved in media and communications skills. The three-day meeting would orient the participants, all members of cooperative societies, on methods of helping local communities to spread awareness in matters related to population, health, economy and social service.

Industry standards seminar planned

AMMAN (Petra) — Seminar on standards and specifications in Jordanian industry will be held at the Ministry of Industry and Trade Monday in cooperation with the German Agency for Technical Cooperation. At least 100 directors of departments, engineers and technicians will take part in the three-day meeting.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by artist Mohammad Al Windawi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by artists Akram Isawi and Jamal Baddawi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by artist Shaker Abu Ghazaleh at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.
- ★ Art exhibition by Syrian artist Yasser Hammond at Baladna Art Gallery (Wadi Al Tal Street).
- ★ Exhibition by Lebanese artist Hussein Madi at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists. (Tel. 643251/2)
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Makram Khaghandouqah at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition on the art of architecture at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by several Iraqi and Jordanian artists at Orfali Art Gallery (Tel. 8269332).
- ★ Art exhibition by Suha Noursi entitled "Landscapes" at the Hotel Jordan Inter-Continental Gallery (8:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.).

DRAMA

- ★ Drama in Arabic entitled "The Question" at the Royal Cultural Centre (11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.).

LECTURES

- ★ Lecture by Ms. Nelly Lama entitled "Japanese Culture Nature Worship" with slides show at the Young Women's Christian Association at 10:00 a.m.
- ★ Lecture by Dr. Irfan Rasheed entitled "The Arab Element in Syria Prior to the Islamic Conquest" at the Arab Thought Forum at 6:00 p.m.
- ★ Lecture entitled "The Negotiations With The Israelis: Where Did It Get To And What Are The Prospects?" by PLO Executive Committee Member Tayseer Khaled at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

BAZAAR

- ★ Bazaar (containing ceramics, flowers, leather products, handicrafts, drawing on mirrors and others) at the Royal Cultural Centre (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.).

AMMAN MARRIOTT HOTEL WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE CHEF

The Amman Marriott Hotel is delighted to welcome back Mohammad Sebouai, one of its stars from the opening of the hotel in 1982.



At that time Sebouai, who originates from Tunisia, was one of the extremely successful kitchen management team that helped to create new standards of culinary excellence in Amman.

After four years in Jordan, and based on his outstanding performance, Sebouai was promoted to Marriott's flagship hotel in Washington DC, the J.W. Marriott Hotel. Having cooked for the many heads of state and visiting dignitaries who stay at that hotel, Sebouai was then promoted to Executive Chef of the Crystal City Marriott, also in Washington DC.

Wanting to return to Marriott's International division due to the exciting development planned over the coming years, Sebouai was delighted to take on the challenge of being Executive chef of the Amman Marriott Hotel, and returning to Jordan.

Sebouai, who is married with one son, has already made a huge impression on all those who work with him and have dined with him. His quality approach to everything that he does is sure to re-establish the Amman Marriott Hotel as the premier hotel in the city for fine dining and creativity.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

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Conflict beyond borders

IN ITS attempt to bring the Kurdish rebellion against its rule to an end, Ankara has been waging a political and military campaign against the rebels of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK). Turkey has been able through negotiations with Syria to limit the PKK's presence and training activity in Lebanon's Beqaa Valley that is under Syrian military control. However, after the authorities and the PKK failed to continue the talks they started last year to end the rebellion peacefully, Ankara and the PKK have escalated the conflict and are now locked in bloody fighting in south-east Turkey that has already spilled over in neighbouring countries.

In December, the Turkish airforce went hunting for PKK rebels in northern Syria and this week it attacked bases that the PKK has allegedly setup in northern Iraq. The Turkish incursion into Syria seems to have been diplomatically and quietly contained since both countries are intent on keeping good relations. But the attack on PKK bases in northern Iraq seems to have extended into Iran. While Baghdad has kept silent on the Turkish raid against Iraqi territory that presently falls within the U.N.-declared no-fly zone, the Iranians have maintained that "several rockets and bombs" hit villages in Iran, killing and wounding many people. The victims of those attacks, whether in Turkey itself, in Iraq, Syria or Iran are of course the Kurdish people themselves. Since the end of the Ottoman empire early this century and its splintering, the Kurdish people, dispersed mainly in three countries (Iraq, Iran and Turkey), have been falling victim to the regimes there. They were discriminated against; this leading to the establishment of Kurdish liberation movements in the three countries. And each of the three neighbours pitted each faction against the other. The Kurdish people thus have become fuel for their feuds. What made the situation worse recently was the West's encouragement of Iraqi Kurds to revolt against Iraq's central authority and abandoning it later.

The Kurdish people, like everybody else, deserve to have their national rights and aspirations respected and their grievances addressed. Unless this is done in a thorough and democratic manner that involves Iraq, Iran and Turkey, the conflict will only escalate and deepen.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily bitterly attacked the "cowardly" group that perpetrated the assassination of the Jordanian diplomat in Beirut Naeb Maaitah, who fell as one of Jordan's martyrs. Tareq Masarweh said that over the past years, many Jordanian diplomats were lost but they were all martyrs as they were performing their duty in the service of the country. The murderers are not revealing themselves because they are ashamed of the cause for which they are committing these crimes, said Masarweh. He said that the criminals have their hearts full of malice and hatred against the innocent civilians, but the Jordanians are determined to pay these criminals with their own coin and deal with them on equal terms of cruelty once they are caught. The writer said that the long years of sufferings have proved that Jordan and the Jordanian people and leadership were right all along as they were steadfast in their defence of their cause and steadfast in their fight against terrorism and terrorists. He said that Jordan has been true to its national affiliation and despite its being small and having meagre resources this country has been offering sacrifices for the sake of the whole nation.

MAZEN HUAZI, a columnist in Al Ra'i, criticised the work of the Arab League for failing to shoulder its basic responsibilities. It is true that the Arab League had fallen under international pressure in the past and had taken unfair decisions, but the time has come for it to change its stand in the light of the new developments and the changes around the world, demanded the writer. He said that the Arab League is expected to try to lift the U.N. embargo on Iraq through the help of its member states and the world community at large before announcing that a meeting would be held soon to examine the prospect of ending the Arab countries' boycott of Israel. He said that there is no need for the Arab League to discuss this question at all at a time when the Arab countries have not yet regained their usurped rights and it must not be taken up at all since the negotiators are still involved in the parity with the Israelis. The writer said that ending the sufferings of the Iraqis should take priority over other topics now contemplated by the Arab League.

The View from Fourth Circle

Revitalising the strengths of the Semitic family

The slow pace of negotiations on the implementation of the PLO-Israel Declaration of Principles has left many people in the region frustrated, especially because of the continued string of concessions the PLO appears to be making in order to start the process of Israeli redeployment and withdrawal. Opinion polls among Israelis and Palestinians show steady erosion of support for the Sept. 13 peace accord, which is the major manifestation of the frustration and scepticism that seem to dominate the political psyche of the people most directly concerned.

Nevertheless, the negotiations plod on, which is a good sign that the enormous promise of justice and peace may yet be achieved in this region. While the short-term frustration we witness is understandable, I would like to suggest that this is largely a consequence of a very narrow perception of what is taking place. Each side is looking primarily at its own interests and rights, based on a very constricted perspective that reflects the legacy of this region's modern political history: the fragmentation of a historically broad and inclusive region into small national entities that focus exclusively on their own territorial, political, demographic, economic and religious assets, in the small countries that we inhabit in the wake of the post-World War I, post-colonial era. In the midst of the current frustration, I would like to offer a more expansive and hopeful perspective on the political forces at work in our region.

Largely as a consequence of the interaction between European colonialism and the indigenous peoples of the Middle East in the 19th and 20th centuries, we find ourselves engaged today in political, ideological, ethnic and even religious confrontations that threaten to keep the region divided and at war with itself. It is now clear that the Arab-Israeli conflict is a central but relatively small component of the broader struggles for survival and progress that define the Middle East and North Africa.

Many people find the current peace process demeaning to Arabs and Muslims because it finds us in a position of relative weakness vis-a-vis the Israelis and their supporters in the United States. We make repeated concessions in order to obtain a fraction of our rights on part of our land. We fear that peace will allow Israel to dominate the region economically. Even meetings with Jewish delegations from the West are seen by many amongst us to be a sign of our weakness.

I would suggest, however, that our perception of our identity and our rights within the narrow and historically novel confines of small states such as Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria will only lead to further frustration, and probably to continued conflict. There is a need to look at ourselves in a broader manner that reduces the prevalent tensions and confrontations, and that allows us to look to the future with a greater sense of hope.

This will become urgent in the decades to come, as the population pressures in this region create intense stresses on the natural resource base and economic resources of the region. We are already suffering severe stress in the sectors of water, arable land, food and jobs, with our current population of around 230 million Arabs. These pressures will become intolerable and politically destabilising when the population of the Arab region reaches around 700 million in the middle of the next century.

The unspoken acknowledgement of these realities, I suspect, has helped launch the current peace process; it has become clear to all concerned parties that the militaristic and nationalistic confrontation of the 20th century has failed to assure the rights of any single party to the conflict. We are all caught in a degrading and wasteful cycle of warfare and denial, all the time turning inwards to our narrow identities as states, ethnic groups or religions.

A successful conclusion to the peace process may be the first step to transcending this confrontational historical phase of our region's development and to embarking on a more productive new journey of historical and national renewal. That journey into a brighter future requires that we redefine ourselves in a manner that taps the collective strengths and assets of the people who comprise this region — not only natural resources and economic assets, but also the collective power of our identity, ethnicity and religion.

I would suggest that we already have a common denominator that would allow us to do this — our collective identity as Semites. The terms "Semites" and "semitic" were coined by 18th century western scholars to describe the peoples, languages and cultures of the Middle East in antiquity, especially in the Fertile Crescent. The ancient Semites were all the peoples descended from Shem, one of the three sons of Noah, and they included ancient peoples such as the Arabs, Aramaeans, Assyrians, Babylonians, Hebrews, Phoenicians and Canaanites.

Historically, the Semitic peoples almost always generated a balance amongst themselves that allowed different parts of the Middle East to achieve three important things: a) to permit a natural expression of people's ethnic, religious or national identity within a pluralistic context; b) to allow the four main geographic regions of this area (the Fertile Crescent, the Nile Valley, the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa) to achieve material development; and, c) to contribute to the overall progress of humankind, through creativity and advances in science and technology, agriculture, morality, spirituality and urbanism.

In fact, I would venture to predict, with wild disregard for the frustrations and constraints of today, that we may be on the verge of a dramatic new era of collective progress and productivity for the Semitic people. A resolution of the

Arab-Israeli conflict and a more serious effort to address the other main issues facing our region and its people in the coming half a century could well see a peaceful, more democratic and stable Middle East once again aspire to play the role that it has played several times already in the long saga of human history.

The Muslim, Christian and Jewish members of the Semitic family, unencumbered by their narrow nationalisms and past, can aspire to be a well spring of human creativity and instead working together as they have frequently done in the past, can aspire to be a well spring of human dynamism on a global basis. The serious problems of individualism, consumer societies, especially the pressures of individualism and the fraying of the family, suggest that the world is ripe for a more humane vision of social and national organisation. Islam, Christianity or Judaism on their own cannot provide a complete vision because they are religions and not national ideologies or blueprints for state structures.

The pan-Semitic legacy, however, offers a compelling historical antecedent of pluralism, dynamism and productivity that demands serious study today. The Semitic "nation", if we can use the term, gave the world several major intellectual, moral, social and national concepts: the world's first settled villages in the 7th and 8th millennia BC, the nation-state and urbanism concepts developed in Mesopotamia, Egypt and Palestine in the 4th and 3rd millennia BC, the legal code of Hammurabi, around 2000 BC, the codification of morality in the three great monotheistic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and the technical and philosophical genius of the golden age of Islam in the 8th-11th centuries AD.

These great feats of the Semitic family were achieved by men and women who dared to realise great deeds for themselves and for all humankind — men and women who dreamed on a scale far larger than their own narrow nationalism. Is it possible that the Semitic family can aspire again to such audacity? I think it is not only possible, but imperative that we do so, and that we start to do so by recognising the strengths inherent in the collective resources of the religious, ethnic and national identities that define us, but that also curtail us today, in our 20th century confrontational mode.

A successful conclusion of the peace talks now under way is a vital prerequisite for this next great adventure in the history of our Semitic family and its vast contributions to human society. To meet the enormous challenges of survival and progress that confront us now and in the century to come, we shall have to start thinking on this scale. This is not a new dream, but merely the reactivation and modernisation of an ancient legacy that lives deep within ourselves — if we have the courage and the honesty to recognise it and to give it life once again.

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Europe needs a strong NATO, not utopian gimmicks

By Henry Kissinger

NEW YORK — Perhaps the most significant aspect of Bill Clinton's progress across Europe was obscured by the atmospherics. In fact, the trip ushered in an important reevaluation of heretofore accepted premises of American foreign policy. In effect, the president's statements elevated the radical critique of cold war policies into the operational premises of contemporary American foreign policy.

For nearly half a century, that critique had maintained that Soviet policies were as much caused by American policies as by Communist ideology; that the Soviet government was divided, just like the American, between hawks and doves; that it was the task of American diplomacy to ease Soviet fears, many of which were quite legitimate, and that an attitude of genuine cooperation would overcome Soviet belligerence.

As late as January 1990, these propositions were reaffirmed in a Time article in which Mikhail Gorbachev was anointed Man of the Decade. Its author was Strobe Talbott, recently chosen to be deputy secretary of state, who argued that the doves of 40 years of cold war debate had been right all along, and that it had not been the West's policy that brought about the Soviet collapse but the inherent weakness of the Soviet system; indeed, that the collapse might have occurred earlier had western hardliners not enabled the Soviet leaders to rally their people on behalf of security.

The essence of these themes was repeated by President Clinton on many occasions during his European trip. To explain why he did not favour the admission of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia into NATO, he argued in effect that such a step might be provocative.

He added: "I say to all those in Europe and the United States who would simply have us draw a new line in Europe further east that we should not foreclose the possibility of the best possible future for Europe which is a democracy everywhere, a market economy everywhere, people cooperating everywhere for mutual security."

The assumptions behind his statements challenge the intellectual foundations of NATO, the core of America's postwar foreign policy.

Whether the former victims of Soviet imperialism should join NATO is a complicated question. There are many ways to accomplish that goal, from full membership to various levels of associate membership or, indirectly, via membership in the European Union.

But the key issue is not the

timing of NATO expansion. In putting forward the Partnership for Peace, the administration did not just delay East European participation, it emphatically rejected the principle despite many misleading statements to the contrary.

The partnership invites all the states of the former Soviet Union and all of Moscow's former East European satellites to participate with NATO in a vague, multilateral entity specialising in missions, having next to nothing to do with realistic military tasks; it equates the victims of Soviet and Russian imperialism with its perpetrators and gives the same status to the Central Asian republics at the borders of Afghanistan as it gives to Poland, the victim of four partitions in which Russia participated and the route across which Russia has historically invaded Europe.

Therefore, if the Partnership for Peace is designed to propitiate Russia, it cannot also serve as a way station into NATO, especially as the Clinton administration has embraced the proposition, rejected by all its predecessors for 40 years, that NATO is a potential threat to Russia.

An official travelling with the president's party expressed the logic behind the administration's position when he stated that Eastern Europe would have to find security in placating its feared neighbour. "The most effective thing for us," he said, "is to try to protect Eastern Europe by encouraging anti-imperialist, democratic tendencies in Russia."

It is instructive to compare the current approach with that of Dean Acheson when NATO was founded. Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the secretary of state was asked whether the Soviet Union had reason to fear NATO. His reply was: "Any nation which claims that this treaty is directed against it should be reminded of the biblical admonition that 'the guilty flee where no man pursues.'"

What does it say about Russian attitudes if the expansion of NATO is perceived to be provocative? No reasonable observer can imagine that Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary or Slovakia could ever mount a military threat against Russia, either singly or in combination. The countries of Eastern Europe are terrified, not threatening. And NATO forces, doctrine and deployment are strictly defensive.

Moreover, Russia could easily be given additional assurances, for instance, that no foreign troops would be stationed on the soil of new NATO members — assurances that already exist with respect to the former East German satellite.

The key question, however,



is what the American theory means for NATO. What is to be NATO's precise role in the new dispensation?

If a security guarantee along the Polish-Russian border creates an unacceptable dividing line, why is the current eastern border of NATO any more pacifying? If Russia can veto NATO membership now when it is in need of economic support, what will it veto when it has been strengthened through reform and American economic assistance?

"It is high time to take another look at the administration's Russia policy, which stakes everything on a kind of psychoanalytic social engineering. In the real environment of today's ethnic conflict and internecine struggle in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, how is security and progress to be organised until that utopian world is reached?"

It is high time to take another look at the administration's Russia policy, which stakes everything on a kind of psychoanalytic social engineering. The world evoked by Mr. Clinton's reference to "democracy everywhere... people cooperating everywhere" is decades away. In the real environment of today's ethnic conflict and internecine struggle in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, how is security and progress to be organised until that utopian world is reached?

Can it be wise to create two categories of frontier — those which NATO protects and others which are refused protection — when both frontiers face in the same direction? The practical consequence will be to bring about an unprotected no-man's-land between Germany and Russia, which has

historically been the cause of all recent European conflicts.

A realistic approach to Russia policy would recognise that integrating Russia into the international system has two components that must be kept in balance: influencing Russian attitudes and affecting Russian calculations.

The Clinton administration deserves support in extending generous economic assistance to Russian reform. And Russia should be made welcome in institutions that foster economic

understand such a calculus better than appeals to an abstract and distant utopianism.

Russia is bound to have a special security interest in what it calls the "near abroad" — the other republics of the former Soviet Union. The test is whether the rest of the world treats this relationship as an international problem subject to accepted rules of foreign policy or as an outgrowth of unilateral Russian decision-making to be influenced, if at all, by appeals to Russian goodwill.

Perhaps the most serious misapprehension of the Partnership for Peace proposal is that a reformist Russian government would automatically abandon traditional foreign policy goals. For the incentives of the most well-meaning Russian government are quite different.

Nationalism is on the rise, and there is a great temptation to ease the pain of transition to market economies for the Russian population by appealing to that basic instinct. This is reflected in President Boris Yeltsin's refusal to go along with NATO in punishing Serbia and in his reaction to the partnership proposal.

Mr. Yeltsin is reported to have asked that all the successor states of the Soviet Union and all former East European satellites join it simultaneously, thereby fulfilling a decade-long Kremlin policy of diluting NATO to the point of irrelevance.

At the moment, Russian armies are in Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Estonia, Latvia and Tajikistan and participate in some of the local civil wars with a strategy that seems designed to make these new republics — all of them members of the United Nations — rue their independence. The foreign minister of Russia has repeatedly put forward a

scheme for a Russian monopoly on peacekeeping in the "near abroad," indistinguishable from an attempt to reestablish Moscow's domination. By its silence and its repeated invocation of an American-Russian partnership, the United States acquiesces in these actions.

A moderate Russian foreign policy will be impeded, not helped, by turning a blind eye to the reappearance of historic Russian imperial pretensions. Russia's effort at reform cannot exempt it from accepted principles of conducting foreign policy. It is in fact ambiguity about dividing lines, not their existence, and ambivalence about western reactions, not their certainty, that tempt militarists and nationalists. Reform will be strengthened if moderates are put in a position of highlighting the dangers of a nationalistic Russian policy.

Russia and America share a mutual interest in a stable Europe and Central Europe. This can be achieved only by America's presence in Europe, which is based on NATO. Stability in Europe requires reaffirming the centrality of NATO rather than diluting it in an abstract multilateralism.

This leads to the following conclusions: — The Partnership for Peace should be redefined to deal primarily with political, economic and cultural issues for which the proper venue is the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, not NATO.

— NATO must face the fact that some form of membership for Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia is inevitable. In the wake of the NATO summit, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has urged speeding up the entry of these four countries into the European Union, of which they are already associate members. Since almost all the members of the European Union are also members of NATO, it is inconceivable that the Union will for long accept the notion that some of its territory is not protected. At that point at the latest, either the NATO guarantee will be extended or NATO will fall apart.

A statesman can always escape his dilemmas by making the most favorable assumptions about the future. The new Russian leadership is entitled to understanding for the anguish of trying to overcome two generations of Communist misrule, and to help in building a new society. But in pursuing that goal, American policy must not be embarrassed to emphasise that domestic reform, however, desirable, contributes to a better world only if Russia embraces the disciplines of a cooperative international system as well as its benefits — Los Angeles Times.

Israeli peace moves could pay off in U.S. arms

By Bradley Burston
Reuter

TEL AVIV — In what could be an ironic byproduct of its Middle East peace-making, Israel stands to gain access to American warplanes previously off-limits and a U.S. boost for its secret missile projects.

Since Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin cut a peace deal with his onetime nemesis the PLO in September, U.S. aircraft giants McDonnell-Douglas and Lockheed have waged a fierce corporate dogfight — with the Pentagon's blessing — over the right to sell Israel the world's most potent warplanes.

U.S. President Bill Clinton, in an apparent bid to kick stalled Syrian-Israeli peace talks into gear, told Mr. Rabin last week of a policy change on space technology that could indirectly boost Israel's classified long-range offensive missile programme.

Arms largesse has long been a good indicator of American attitudes towards the policies of Israel, the largest single recipient of U.S. military aid at \$1.8 billion annually.

"The whole relationship on arms-related issues improved the moment Rabin took office," said Joseph Alpher, director of Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Centre of Strategic Studies.

Mr. Rabin's hardline predecessor Yitzhak Shamir riled Washington with his strong endorsement of Jewish settlement expansion and uncompromising stances in the U.S.-sponsored talks that began in 1991 with Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Palestinians.

As a defiant Shamir dug in his heels against concessions to the Arabs, Washington exerted a range of pressures on weapons purchases and began probing export sales of Israeli arms it suspected had unlawfully incorporated U.S. hardware and knowhow.

Mr. Alpher said Mr. Rabin's stated willingness to trade occupied land for peace and his curbs on Jewish settlement spurred the warming trend in U.S. arms policy towards Israel.

The White House recognises it is "important for Rabin to be

able to show Israelis there is already a 'peace dividend' in maintaining Israel's ability to deter future attack, in return for Rabin's readiness to discuss the territorial issue," Mr. Alpher said.

In the looking-glass logic of the Middle East, Israel has said it needs a strong "deterrent profile" to be able to risk giving up land its public sees as a buffer against Arab offensives.

The first dividend is likely to come with wings attached.

Soon after Mr. Rabin accepted a Clinton nudge and shook hands with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in September, the Pentagon upgraded Israel's choices in a pending \$2 billion fighter purchase to include McDonnell-Douglas' Premier F-15E and an ultra-sophisticated version of the Lockheed F-16.

This month Mr. Clinton capped glimmers of progress in a summit with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad with a message to Mr. Rabin saying Washington had agreed to open up space project tenders to previously-banned Israeli technology.

"President Clinton's declaration represents a breakthrough for Israel," said Moshe Keret, president of state-owned Israeli Aircraft Industries (IAI), developers of lightweight, relatively inexpensive satellites and launch rockets for commercial use.

IAI and other Israeli defence contractors are quick to insist the Clinton statement applied solely to civilian projects.

But analysts note that as Israeli arms firms battle to offset recent losses and domestic cutbacks, success in marketing communications satellites and commercial launch vehicles could help finance further development of military technology.

IAI's Shavit rocket is widely believed to be a civilian version of the army's secret Jericho surface-to-surface missile.

Atomic experts and foreign reports have linked the Jericho to what they say is Israel's atomic weapons programme. They say the Jericho is capable of propelling a nuclear warhead distances of more than 1,500 km.

A historical paintings of patriot artists

By Janset Shami

I ACCUSE. I accuse Omar Bsoul and Riham Ghassib of being ahistorical artists. They look into their hearts and they become so absorbed with their wealth of discovery that they neglect to pay attention to the contemporary trends in art. Their preoccupation is limited to interpreting the truth and the beauty they have glimpsed in their hearts, presenting their genuine productions to the viewer. "Look," they say, "isn't the world a wonderland?" "Look," they insist, "aren't the people who populate it wonderful?"

Since Henri Rousseau had started to attract the attention of the Parisian art fans in 1920s, many different names have been given to this style of art. If we go categorically, we start with a long name: Les Peintres de Sacre Coeur. This name, which was invented by an art critic and dealer called Wilhelm Uhde, did not prove itself satisfactory. So, in 1929, Andre Lhote called it Arte Populaire, giving it a sociological connotation. But in 1920s, the term "Primitive art" took its place. This rather confusing name immediately brings to mind the cave paintings of the pre-historic people. When we read that even the art of Republican and Imperial Rome is considered post-primitive art, it is misleading to call a living and flourishing art form primitive art. Nevertheless this title is still prevalent in the U.S.

Many theories were put forward about the birth and the

separate existence of Naive Art. Some were complimentary, some were not. Some categorised Naive artists as "unschooled artists." Dimitrije Basicovic has this to say on the subject of schooled and unschooled artists: "All statistics will show that numerous is the army of schooled paintings who failed to such measure that they were written off."

Although Henri Rousseau's work was exhibited at the "Salon" in Paris, the public assumed a condescending air towards it, led by the tone of the critics. His paintings were almost ridiculed. The critic Lormell gave an explanation in L'Idée Moderne. He wrote: "Rousseau... is primitive because he cannot do otherwise."

This comment was fair and unfair at the same time. If we take this criticism in a positive way, we can repeat it changing it a little bit. Rousseau could not do otherwise because he could not exchange his heart with someone else's, because his heart could not see his subjects in any other way.

I think this goes for all the Naive artists. And we can make one point in their favour. Those artists are more universal than many other modern artists. In spite of their individualistic approach to their direct, undiluted sincerity. Having said that, I would like to add that in appreciating a piece of art, the yardstick we use must be its esthetics. We should not be overly preoccupied with its psychological and social traits.

Many art forms have come and gone, but the art move-

ment of the Naive painters is continually replenished. Because it is timeless. Because it has universal appeal.

Let us come to our two artists now. First Omar Bsoul, who is currently having a exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre. It opened on Jan. 19 and will continue until Jan. 31. This is Omar Bsoul's 22nd exhibition. His first two exhibitions took place in 1978 in Damascus and Irbid. His recent exhibitions were held at the Alia Art Gallery (1990), French Cultural Centre (1991) and the British Council (1992). One of his paintings won a prize from Germany in 1990.

His life story is as simple and straightforward as his paintings are. He was born in Irbid in 1951, and he still lives there. He is the owner of a barber shop. When the last customer leaves, Omar Bsoul's shop turns into a studio. He paints there every evening. His main income, to support his wife and his six children however, comes from his barber shop. Considering that he uses only his spare time for his paintings, he is unusually productive.

Coming to Riham Ghassib, her life is quite different from Omar Bsoul's. She is the daughter of the late governmental minister who held several portfolios. She was born in a smart area of Jabal Amman in her father's imposing three-storey stone house. She still lives there. Her early school years were spent in Amman, and she continued her education in the U.S., at a college in Kaosap. She obtained a B.A. degree in English literature, with a

minor in art. But since the completion of her education her only interest has been art. Recently, her work has been acclaimed. Slowly, but surely, she is taking her rightful place in the art scene of Jordan. She is one of the six Jordanian artists whose work is to be exhibited at the National Museum in Washington D.C. This exhibition is organised by the International Council for Woman in the Arts and will be opened by Her Majesty Queen Nour. Riham Ghassib's chosen picture for this exhibition is "Salt". The exhibition will travel all over the U.S. for a year.

Riham Ghassib's first one-man show took place in 1987 at the Royal Cultural Centre. She presented another exhibition in the following year at the same place. She also took part in group exhibitions in Spain and Dallas, Texas.

I, Janset Shami, myself, confessed ahistorical artist, was born in Istanbul. I studied English literature first at Ankara University and after that at the Queen Mary College of London University and first exhibited my work in Beirut and then in Baghdad. My first exhibition in Jordan took place at the old American Centre of Jabal Amman in 1969. In 1973, I continued under the tutelage of the late Princess Fakhrelnisa Zeid who used to call me "my first student," as she gave her first lesson to me. This was even before she started her Royal Institute of Fine Arts. Hind Nasser, Suha Shuman and Ofemia Rizk, who were all taught by her, became well-known both in Jordan and



Painting by Janset Shami

abroad.

Encouraged by Princess Fakhrelnisa I exhibited my mainly Naive work at the Petra Bank Gallery in 1987. Since then I have been busy writing. Being affected by some positive as well as negative currents, however, I have decided to take up art again seriously.

If we want to delve into an analysis with an eye on comparison, the first thing that comes to mind is Riham Ghassib's patriotism. She is a true Jordanian who loves her country. They say that the Naive artists search for paradise lost. Riham Ghassib did not need to look far. Paradise is Jordan! She reflects her love in her landscapes sprinkling them with villas, modest houses and sheep and shepherds. She populates her wedding parties with an enormous number of people, be they country gatherings or sophisticated parties. She works on each and every figure with loving care.

Omar Bsoul's interest is mainly people. His portraits are of home-loving people.

They sit calmly in the company of each other, usually a mother, a father and a child. Sometimes two beautiful young girls are seen next to each other. There is a door in the background. There is a decorated mat underneath their crossed legs. There is a vase somewhere in the picture. Whether his subjects are male or female, they are wholesome and beautiful. The viewer looks at their large eyes and tries to hear their view about life. They may give them, if asked. And if they did, they would give it in their direct, uncluttered statements, as most Jordanians do.

It is not only the outline of the subjects that are offered to the viewer in a direct way, but also their colours. Omar Bsoul does not bother to mix his colours. The precise performance of this brush uses the colours as they come out of the tubes. When you look at the pictures, the reds, yellows, blacks, greens appear in front of your eyes and soon you hear them signing folk tunes in your heart.

The sleep gap — a growing danger

By Jane E. Brody

NEW YORK — As you read this, millions of sleep-deprived people are driving cars and trucks, operating hazardous machinery, administering medical care, monitoring nuclear power plants and even piloting commercial jets.

Chances are, every one of those sleep-deprived people is performing below par. Many are so sleepy that they are likely to nod off at the drop of a hat — while reading, listening to a lecture, driving on a monotonous road, flying on autopilot. Even if they do not fall asleep, their ability to attend to crucial details, like which runway to land on, and their judgment are likely to be

seriously impaired.

Although no major airline accident has been linked directly to a sleepy cockpit crew, undue fatigue has resulted in pilots' failing to read gauges correctly and landing not only on the wrong runway but even at the wrong airport.

Among drivers of automobiles, long-haul trucks and even buses, sleepiness is believed to be responsible for a large share of accidents. Those drivers who live to tell the tale often report that they did not know they were about to fall asleep; it just happened.

Dr. William Dement, a sleep disorders specialist at Stanford University, says many sleep-deprived people are as likely to fall asleep suddenly under in-

appropriate and even dangerous circumstances as are people with serious sleep disorders, like sleep apnea and narcolepsy.

Sleepiness has become an endemic condition in our 24-hour society, where light bulbs and television sets prompt people to postpone bedtimes and assign alarm clocks to arouse them each morning.

It is not uncommon for top executives to attribute their success to the fact that they sleep only three or four hours a night, but sleep experts say

that this is nonsense and that bosses would be far more effective if they slept more.

Evolution programmed humans to go to sleep soon after nightfall and to arise as the dawn breaks, which at the Equator (where human beings evolved) means people would sleep about nine hours a night. And indeed, studies in sleep laboratories, where people live without knowing when it is day and night and have no alarm clocks to tell them when to arise, have shown that most adults need eight to eight and a

half hours of sleep a night.

But in real life they get less than seven. With each fore-shortened night, they add to their growing sleep debt until they reach a point where they can no longer voluntarily stay awake.

According to Dr. James Maas, a professor of psychology who is a sleep researcher at Cornell University, the most sleep-deprived of all are high school and college students. From the ages of 17 to 25, sleep needs are greater than at any other time of life after

early childhood, but the pressures to postpone or even skip sleep are also greatly increased.

Sleep studies have shown that these young people need about 10 hours of sleep a night. Yet the average student sleeps only six hours, accumulating a sleep debt that grows by four hours a night. Parents bemoan their teenagers' "laziness" because they sleep until noon on weekends, but most of these young people are only trying to cancel some of their weeklong sleep debt — New York Times.

Polish security policeman's trial touches thorny issues

By Timothy Heritage
Reuter

WARSAW — Adam Humer sits impassively in the dock as a Polish court lists charges after charges that he helped beat and torture political prisoners as a security police chief more than 41 years ago.

Elderly men and women who say they were victims of the brutality look on from the front rows of court. A few metres away, 13 lower ranking former communist security police officials sit hiding their faces from photographers.

The trial of Mr. Humer, who is accused of killing one of his prisoners, and of 13 former colleagues is one of the first of its kind since the communists lost power in Poland in 1989. The defendants deny the more serious charges.

For some Poles, it revives bitter memories of a period they believe would be best forgotten. Others say the trial offers a chance to reveal the truth about the sometimes bloody and painful decade after World War II.

"At last we have a chance for satisfaction," said former political prisoner Wlodzimierz Minchberg at the Warsaw court where he has watched the trial since last September.

"For years we could not talk about these things. But there were hundreds of people like these. We need to show people the horror of what happened," said Mr. Minchberg, now in his mid-60s.

Tens of thousands of people were interned and hundreds sentenced to death during the late 1940s and early 1950s as the communist authorities, installed by Soviet dictator Josef Stalin at the end of World War II, cracked down on dissent.

The official view about Poland's first communist president, Boleslaw Bierut, radically changed in the late 1980s and his rule from 1947 to 1956 was denounced.

Although communist rule has ended, and many details of Bierut's period in office are now known, few attempts have been made to try any of the former communist officials involved in persecutions.

"Bierut was to blame but so too were the people who carried out the crimes. They beat people on the head, in the genitals, on the knees. They should be punished," said another former political prisoner, who declined to give his name.

Mr. Humer, now 76, is Poland's most senior surviving security police officer from Stalinist times. As director of the Investigation Department of the former Ministry of Public Security, he helped interrogate prisoners.

Staring out through thick spectacles, Mr. Humer shows few visible signs of emotion as he hears the charges of "physical and moral abuse" of prisoners between 1946 and 1952, including torture and beatings which resulted in death.

He has pleaded not guilty to the main charge of killing student Tadeusz Libedzki, a political activist beaten to death in 1946, and has denied knowledge of any premeditated torture.

The most brutal treatment he dished out was occasionally slapping prisoners, he says.

Although he and the other defendants deny many of the charges, the trial provides a rare public documentation of what former prisoners identify as the security police's methods.

The state prosecutor has listed cases of prisoners being detained without charge and beaten with whips, batons and wooden and metal objects.

The interrogators are alleged to have poured cold water over prisoners in winter and leaving the windows of cells open, prevented inmates from sleeping for long periods, smashing their fingers in the door and burning them with irons.

Prisoners are said to have been forced to kneel on boards with nails sticking from them, sit on the leg of an overturned stool, have water poured into their nostrils and be ducked in toilets.

In one case, a prisoner lost 16 teeth during an interrogation and in many cases prisoners were said to be permanently physically or mentally injured.

Mr. Minchberg was 19 when he was arrested for belonging to the National Armed Forces

(NSZ), an opposition nationalist group which resisted the communist takeover. He was sentenced to a six-year jail term in 1948.

"It was completely normal for the security police to beat prisoners. You'd enter the room, sit down and they would strike you as if it were their way of saying hello," he said.

Mr. Humer's trial is unlikely to be a precedent for others because few former security police officials are still alive.

Although human rights violations were frequent after Beirut's death in 1956, attempts to bring the communist leaders themselves to trial have also been rare.

Even the record of the last communist leader, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, is not clean. He suppressed the Solidarity movement in the 1980s, legalising it later.

But it was Mr. Jaruzelski who launched the only major communist trial into the security police in recent years, following the murder of pro-solidarity priest Jerzy Popieluszko in 1984. Four security policemen were eventually jailed for the crime.

The only senior communist to be tried since 1989 is General Czeslaw Kiszczak, interior minister when the police broke up a protest at the Wujek coal mine in southern Poland in 1981, killing nine people. His trial is still under way.

The Solidarity-dominated governments of 1989 to 1993 decided not to launch a campaign to punish former communists, regarding "a witch hunt" as a destabilising factor.

Political momentum to punish ex-communists has diminished further since former communists won elections in September.

Examining the past is not on the new left-wing government's agenda, while the right-wing parties, which campaigned for the ex-communists to be punished now, have no seats in parliament.

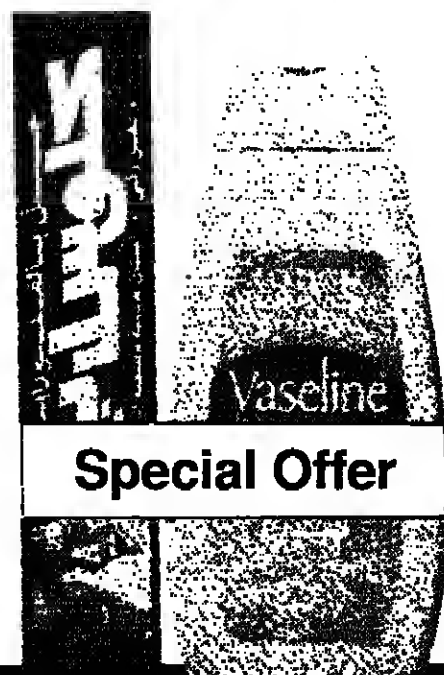


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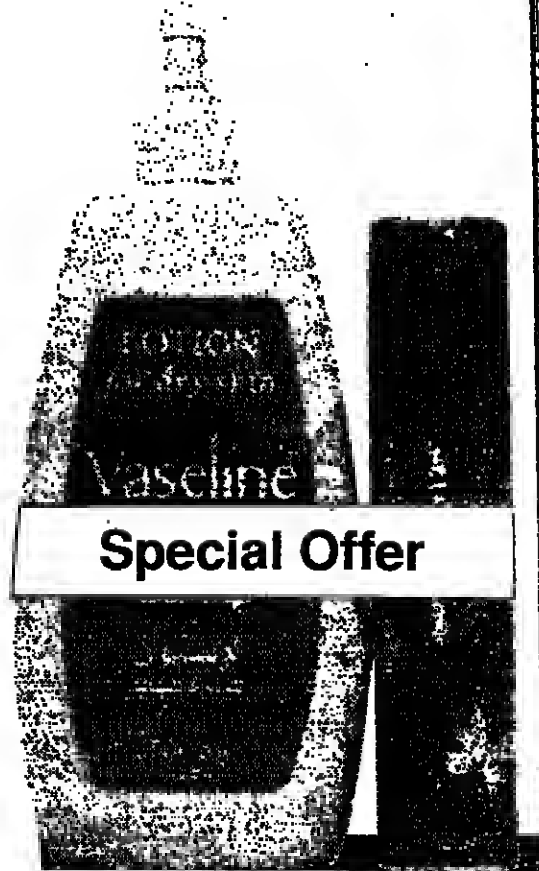
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M.E. seeks money to rebuild

DAVOS, Switzerland (AFP) — While Israel and the PLO work to nail down their first peace agreement, they are also pressing efforts to boost the region's economy as the sole guarantor of long-term stability.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO chief Yasser Arafat appeared at the World Economic Forum here to plead for regional cooperation and international aid for the Middle East.

Mr. Peres said the participants in the peace process would hold an economic conference in Amman for would-be investors from the United States, Europe and Japan. Jordan said it could be held this year.

"The only way to reduce the standard of hatred is to improve the standard of prosperity," he told an audience packed with top political and business leaders gathered in the Swiss Alps.

Mr. Arafat lashed out at opponents of the peace negotiations and said "these extremist and fanatic groups will increase their influence in this atmosphere of imbalance, instability, poverty and injustice."

"The most important platform which we can depend upon to achieve stability is justice, justice, for all off us," Mr. Arafat said. "Stability cannot be implemented without a strong economic platform."

The PLO leader renewed his call for a Middle East "Marshall plan" equivalent to the one that helped put Europe back on its feet after World War II.

"Priority should be given to the occupied territory which has suffered an imbalance under the occupation," he said.

The PLO leader drew applause with a pledge that the private sector would play an important role in investments and management of the occupied territories.

He said 60 per cent of the \$13 billion which the Palestinians are seeking in international aid over seven years would go to develop the private sector.

Mr. Arafat said he told U.S. President Bill Clinton that the region had the potential to be a "new Somalia" or a "new Singapore," referring to the tiny Asian economic dynamo.

"We have the skilled labour to become a new Singapore, we have the highest level of education in the region, but we need your help," he concluded.

Joan Spero, U.S. under-secretary of state for economic and agricultural affairs, said that true regional cooperation in the Middle East could come only after the Arab boycott of Israel ends.

"It is a remnant of the past which the region cannot afford," she said.

U.S. dependence on foreign oil expected to grow

WASHINGTON (AP) — America's dependence on foreign oil will continue to grow into the next century, with net imports reaching 60 per cent of domestic consumption by the year 2010, the Energy Department has predicted.

The department's annual energy outlook report said that the growth of petroleum imports will come despite significant gains in energy efficiency and a greater use of natural gas as a fuel and use of other energy sources.

The forecast, using various computer models, predicted that domestic crude oil production will continue on its current decline until 2006 and then rebound somewhat because of rising prices.

It said petroleum use will likely increase to about 21 million barrels a day by 2010, compared with 17 million barrels a day in 1992 — the latest year for which complete figures were available.

Natural gas use also will increase by about 13 per cent during the same time period, although utilities will continue to rely heavily on coal for electricity generation.

The outlook said that in 1992 net petroleum imports — the difference between domestic production and consumption, which takes into account U.S. petroleum exports — was 39 per cent.

The outlook study said there are expected to be considerable energy savings over the next 16 years because of more efficient appliances and improved building design and construction. This will restrain growth in energy consumption that otherwise might have occurred, said the report.

"Advances in appliances and building efficiencies are driving much of the anticipated (energy consumption) improvements," said the report by the Energy Information Administration.

tration, a research agency within the Energy Department.

It said the efficiency gains are anticipated without development of new technologies. The widespread use of the most efficient appliances already on the market could cut residential energy use by 25 per cent, the analysis concluded.

The study said that while significant efficiency gains are likely to be made in residential and industrial energy use, it does not envision a great reduction in petroleum use for transportation.

"People will continue to drive more and new car efficiency gains will not be as rapid as in the 1980s," said the study. More cars and more congestion on the road are likely to result in poorer actual gasoline mileage than what cars would be expected to get under test conditions, it said.

Other findings in the outlook study were: Total primary energy consumption is expected to grow 23 per cent by 2010, compared with 1992.

Coal production is expected to increase by 20 per cent to 1.2 billion tonnes by 2010, though much of it will be exported. There also will be continued heavy reliance on coal to generate electricity.

Natural gas production will increase 13 per cent to 20.2 trillion cubic feet by 2010. Natural gas prices are predicted to increase on average 3.9 per cent a year at the wellhead.

Meanwhile Japanese oil executives have criticised a proposed Western carbon tax and urged the West instead to help developing nations use energy resources more efficiently to protect the environment.

Hideo Ichikawa, executive vice president of the Japanese oil company Cosmo, said emission of carbon dioxide was expected to increase because of low efficiency in energy consumption in the developing world.

"If such taxes or other methods are applied in an attempt to control oil consumption quickly, the industries that consume a lot of energy will probably take action to relocate to the countries where taxes are not imposed," he said in a paper presented at an oil seminar.

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China issues ban on new building projects

BEIJING (R) — Desperately trying to control a building boom that is fuelling inflation and diverting money from key state projects, China Sunday issued a ban on new construction projects in 1994.

"We must strictly control approval of new projects, reduce the number of projects and improve management over the approval process," said a lengthy order from the State Council (cabinet) published in the People's Daily.

"To prevent continued expansion of the scale of construction, in principle no new projects will be approved this year," the order said.

Figures just released by the State Statistical Bureau (SSB) show the building boom continued last year despite repeated attempts by Beijing to curb it.

Investment in fixed assets last year totalled 1,184.2 billion yuan (\$136 billion), an astonishing 58 per cent increase over 1992, with rises in the provinces of Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi and Hainan — all of the south and east coast — double or nearly double the previous year, the SSB said.

The biggest construction increases were funded with capital raised by the builder himself or by foreign investment, throwing doubt on whether the State Council's order will actually cool the boom.

Projects that are bank-funded are easier for the government to control through its control of the banks, analysts said. Privately-funded projects require only the approvals of local officials, who may be anxious to see a project begin.

Beijing wants money and materials to go into building power stations, railway lines and telecommunications to ease worsening bottlenecks, and not into office buildings, hotels and luxury villas that usually offer a better return on capital.

The construction boom has outpaced increases in the output of steel, cement and other building materials, forming a key element in pushing up the rate of inflation.

SSB figures show the rate for all 1993 at 14.5 per cent nationwide and 19.6 per cent in the major cities, where the year-on-year rate in December rose to 23.9 per cent.

In the urban consumer basket in December, the highest increases were for fresh vegetables, up 46.5 per cent from a year earlier, and for grain, up 42.4 per cent.

Worst hit were Haikou, capital of Hainan province, with 34 per cent and Nanchang, capital of Jiangxi province, with 33.6 per cent. Both are in the booming south.

The construction boom is one of a number of China's unstable economic factors, the semi-official China News Service said Sunday in a sombre forecast for the economy in 1994.

It said many places were just waiting for Beijing to give them more authority in order to start many new projects.

It said the authorities started loosening controls on credit in September, so there was fast growth in cash and loans in the fourth quarter.

If this excess rate of credit-easing continues, the economy will start overheating again.

France announces measures to liven economic growth

PARIS (R) — France Sunday announced plans to encourage growth by boosting consumer spending, particularly on cars and housing, and said it would take steps to help create new jobs for the unemployed.

But the government stopped well short of any radical changes to its current policies, which it hopes will help produce growth of 1.4 per cent this year.

"The measures are a coherent whole that fits in with the existing line of government policy," Prime Minister Edouard Balladur told a news conference after a keynote government seminar on the economy.

"It's the same thing that is continuing, it's the same inspiration, it's the same policy," he said.

Mr. Balladur said the government had decided to unblock some of the estimated 80 billion francs (\$13.5 billion) locked up in employee profit-sharing schemes, normally withheld for five years.

The money would be re-

leased early for buying a new car or undertaking structural work on property.

The car and building industries were amongst the worst hit by last year's economic recession which saw growth shrink by between 0.7 and 0.8 per cent and spending slow to a trickle.

In addition employees would be able for whatever reason to take out funds which had been credited to them for profits made in 1989 provided their employers agreed.

He said the government would also speed up a programme of refunding value added tax to companies for those which take on new workers, especially young apprentices and other trainees.

The government would also hold talks with hotel, restaurant, and parking concerns to try to persuade these service industries to take on new staff.

Mr. Balladur said there were potentially tens of thousands of jobs that could be created.

Unemployment is running at a record 12 per cent.

Iran's Majlis says no to higher fuel prices

NICOSIA (R) — Iran's parliament, debating a new budget, rejected proposed price rises for oil products and gas, the official IRNA news agency reported Monday.

"Increases in the prices of natural gas, gasoline, kerosene, gas oil and fuel oil, predicted in next year's budget bill, were voted down by the Majlis (parliament) deputies," IRNA said.

Deputies are debating the government's proposed budget for the Iranian year starting March 21, 1994.

Iran's Oil Minister Gholamreza Azgashah has long been trying to persuade deputies to agree to raise domestic prices for oil products, which are currently heavily subsidised.

Parliament, taking a "realistic" view of the market, told the Iranian government Sunday to scale its hopes for oil revenue down to \$10.15 billion in the year starting March 21.

The figure compares with a government estimate of \$11.84 billion next year, actual oil sales of about \$14 billion in the current year and a 1993-94 target of \$17 billion.

The government has warned

deputies that reducing the estimate may force it to cut back on oil industry development.

The deputies' calculation was based on sales 10 per cent below present levels. Their price estimate was not spelled out but some said in debate that \$12 a barrel was more likely than the government's hopes for \$14.

"We set the oil ceiling of revenues at \$10.15 billion," Kazem Mirvalad, secretary of the joint budget and planning, economy and commerce committees, told Tehran radio.

"Considering the situation of the world oil market, among various alternatives we chose the most realistic," he said. We reduced oil export by five per cent of the present level.

We allowed another five per cent reduction for the likelihood of resumption of Iraqi exports," he told the radio that the deputies have "reduced to 58.4 per cent the share of oil in total revenues from the government projection of 65.8 per cent."

Deputies have also called for the government's estimate for next year's total state revenues to be cut to \$17.6 billion from \$19.3 billion.

India's private airlines welcome denationalisation

NEW DELHI (R) — India's private airlines Monday welcomed legal changes putting them on equal footing with state-owned Indian Airlines, saying the move opened the door to better service and more investment.

The government issued a special ordinance at the weekend scrapping the 1953 parliamentary act that nationalised air services and banned private airlines.

"This is a positive step. It will help us compete with the national carrier on a level playing field," said Thakiyudeen Wahid, managing director of East West Airlines, India's biggest private operator.

"We will no longer have to live in uncertainty of being

grounded by some legal case somewhere because we did not have any legal status," he said.

The ordinance allows unrestricted entry to Indian skies for private carriers, and means Indian Airlines and the state's international carrier, Air India, will become publicly limited companies.

About a dozen private airlines have sprung up since India allowed private firms on short-haul and feeder routes in 1990.

East West and several competitors expanded to cover major routes like Delhi-Bombay, for which Indian Airlines legally had the monopoly. They skirted the law by operating on paper as air taxis, and were not allowed to publish flight sche-

dules.

"The fact is that everyone is operating as an airline," Mr. Wahid told Reuters.

The newcomers quickly snatched custom from India Airlines, which had a reputation for poor services and unreliability. They now control about a third of domestic air traffic, with a daily seating capacity of 10,000 against the state airline's 20,000.

A spokesman for Jet Airways, which has four aircraft, said the ordinance would help private carriers improve services with more flights and better passenger comfort.

Airport and air traffic control timings, tailored until now to Indian Airlines schedules, should be revised to accommo-

date private flights, he added.

Airline officials said the ordinance cleared the way for rapid expansion by private firms, which had been wary of investing too much cash while their legal status was shaky.

"We will be introducing two brand new Boeing-737 aircraft by the end of February," said the Jet Airways spokesman.

Mr. Wahid said East West planned to add six aircraft to its current fleet of 10 planes within the next four to five months, financed with a \$30 million equity issue in March.

As publicly limited companies, the state airlines will also be able to raise cash from the market to finance new aircraft rather than relying on government funding.

The Press Trust of India said Indian Airlines and Air India would shortly make public issues to expand their equity base.

Indian Airlines spokesman Matin Khan declined to confirm the report, saying it was too soon to comment on changes within the state carrier.

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THE Daily Crossword by Fred Toole

ACROSS

- Soft drink
- Shopping center
- Family member
- Got up
- Indian
- Shorty
- Conservationist credo
- Underhanded
- Legislators
- Equus pref.
- Ext somewhat formally
- Business co-owners
- Restricted
- Mimicking
- Street groups
- In the manner of
- Outer covering
- Neck hair masses
- Pierre's state: abov.
- Cunning
- Slowly, in music
- "Common Sense" author
- Expressed
- Automators
- Rare
- Theatre sign
- Ornaments
- Electrical measure
- Aphorism
- Wound blemish
- Attorney general
- Adjusted a
- Cincinnati ball club
- Hence
- Mild oaths

DOWN

- Crow calls
- Algerian port
- Run slow, as a watch
- Charles' dog
- Searching for
- Spurious abstr.
- Made a sound like 6D
- Inclinations
- Be of concern
- Domini
- The up a boat
- Photic pests
- Wall St. letters
- Grandmas
- Church
- Large rodents
- Toward the left
- Leads
- Explosive
- Barbara, e.g.
- Spokes
- Chan parlayer
- Routes
- Advertising signs
- Seaport
- Paulo
- Novelist Ira
- Elevate in rank
- Spouts
- Haul
- Scornful look

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

1 Across: Soft drink
2 Across: Shopping center
3 Across: Family member
4 Across: Got up
5 Across: Indian
6 Across: Shorty
7 Across: Conservationist credo
8 Across: Underhanded
9 Across: Legislators
10 Across: Equus pref.
11 Across: Ext somewhat formally
12 Across: Business co-owners
13 Across: Restricted
14 Across: Mimicking
15 Across: Street groups
16 Across: In the manner of
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20 Across: Cunning
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27 Across: Ornaments
28 Across: Electrical measure
29 Across: Aphorism
30 Across: Wound blemish
31 Across: Attorney general
32 Across: Adjusted a
33 Across: Cincinnati ball club
34 Across: Hence
35 Across: Mild oaths
36 Down: Crow calls
37 Down: Algerian port
38 Down: Run slow, as a watch
39 Down: Charles' dog
40 Down: Searching for
41 Down: Spurious abstr.
42 Down: Made a sound like 6D
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59 Down: Advertising signs
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61 Down: Paulo
62 Down: Novelist Ira
63 Down: Elevate in rank
64 Down: Spouts
65 Down: Haul
66 Down: Scornful look

NICOSIA (R) — Israel has decided to gradually convert its power stations and petrochemical plants to be able to burn gas as well as oil in anticipation of possible gas imports from Arab states, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) said Monday.

ery of three million tonnes per year. This could rise later depending on growth of gas demand in Israel, the speed of converting plants to gas use and the potential for using Israel as a transshipment point for Qatari gas to other East Mediterranean countries.

Qatar, till now a crude oil exporter, has three LNG projects to develop its massive gas reserves.

The projects would produce 22 to 25 million tonnes per year, starting gradually in 1997.

MEES said Israeli economic studies have concluded the price to be paid for Gulf gas would be around \$4 per million BTUs.

Qatari Oil Minister Abdullah Bin Hamad Al Atthiyah was

MEES said it understood the volume of gas being dissuaded for transportation to Israel from Egypt, with possible Italian assistance, was two million tonnes per year.

HARTFORD, Connecticut (AP) — Aetna Life and Casualty Co., one of the biggest insurers in the U.S. has announced it will eliminate about 4,000 jobs and discontinue two investment products in an effort to improve profits. The action will result in a reduction in 1993 profits of \$1.03 billion after taxes, the company said. Aetna also announced it has added \$574 million to workers' compensation reserves. This will reduce profits by \$9 million after taxes, the company said. The company is discontinuing two types of retirement investments that insurance companies offer. The company will continue to service existing customers. As of the end of 1993, the company had approximately \$14.7 billion of assets attributable to the two investment products. An \$825 mil-

compensation reserves. This will reduce profits by \$9 million after taxes, the company said. The company is discontinuing two types of retirement investments that insurance companies offer. The company will continue to service existing customers. As of the end of 1993, the company had approximately \$14.7 billion of assets attributable to the two investment products. An \$825 mil-

lion charge to earnings relates to estimated future losses associated with the products. The jobs to be eliminated from the 42,000-employee company will come in both corporate staff and business areas. Company spokesman Jonathan Powell said it's likely a "significant number" of the jobs to be eliminated will be in Hartford, where 35 per cent of the company's employees are based.

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.00	3.13	3.28	3.51
Sterling Pound	5.18	5.31	5.19	5.18
Deutsche Mark	6.09	3.75	5.50	5.12
Swiss Franc	7.06	3.93	3.81	3.56
French Franc	6.37	6.04	5.93	5.56
Japanese Yen	2.18	2.12	2.12	2.06
European Currency Unit	6.50	6.25	6.00	5.56

Other Currencies		Date: 31/11/1994	
Currency		Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar		1.8480	1.8630
Lebanese Lira		0.040575	0.041685
Saudi Riyal		0.1874	0.1883
Kuwaiti Dinar		2.3490	2.3600
Qatari Riyal		0.1911	0.1920
Egyptian Pound		0.2050	0.2200
Omani Riyal		1.8050	1.8210
UAE Dirham		0.1911	0.1920
Greek Drachma		0.2760	0.3145
Cypriot Pound		1.3310	1.3645

[illegible]

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for trading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday in the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.3221/31	Canadian dollar
	1.7410/20	Deutschemarks
	1.9500/10	Dutch guilders
	1.4645/55	Swiss francs
	35.90/94	Belgian francs
	5.9087/37	French francs
	1697.6/9.1	Italian lire
	109.10/20	Japanese yen
	7.9340/40	Swedish crowns
	7.4820/70	Norwegian crowns
	6.7544/94	Danish crowns
one sterling	\$1.4974/84	
one ounce of gold	\$178.20/378.70	

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Bosnian Serb army orders full mobilisation in bid to win war

BELGRADE (AFP) — The Bosnian Serb army ordered a full mobilisation of "all forces available" to press for a rapid victory in the Bosnian war, its general staff said Monday, amid sabre-rattling over possible NATO airstrikes.

"Everyone that can be mobilised will be," the general staff said in the statement issued after a meeting Sunday and reported by the Bosnian Serb Agency (SRNA). The order also applied to women, the statement stressed.

The Bosnian Serb army is strong in weapons but lacks troop strength against the Muslim forces, which are larger in number.

The population will be mobilised into "military or work units with the intention of ending the war as soon as possible and launching economic recovery," the statement said.

The general staff also tightened laws against deserters and people who failed to answer the mobilisation call, urging citizens of the self-proclaimed Serb Republic in Bosnia to "respond to this order without delay."

The general staff had introduced new measures to "in-

crease the efficiency" of the Bosnian Serb army, it said.

The entire economy of the self-declared republic would henceforth operate "in accordance with the defence needs of the country," the statement added.

Meanwhile in Bern, French Defence Minister Francois Leotard warned that Bosnia's three warring parties were becoming embroiled in "a process of war to the death."

"This is something we reject out of hand," he said after meeting with his Swiss counterpart Kaspar Villiger, adding that only "negotiation, diplomacy and political strategy" could bring peace to the country.

In a separate development, Russian ultra-nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy arrived in Bijeljina, northeastern Bosnia, for talks with leaders of the self-declared republic.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy had warned in Belgrade Sunday that North Atlantic Treaty Organisation air strikes against Bosnian Serbs would be "tantamount to a declaration of war on Russia."

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic introduced Mr. Zhirinovskiy to a Russian

volunteer fighting on the Tuzla front in northeast Bosnia.

"The Russians have already arrived... It is a sign of Russia's goodwill," Mr. Zhirinovskiy said.

The mobilisation order came a day after the Bosnian Serb chief of staff General Manojlo Milovanovic said his forces would oppose any attempt by the international community to forcibly reopen Tuzla Airport.

He warned Sunday that the airport serving the besieged Muslim-held town was within range of Serb artillery.

"No plane will be able to forcibly land at Tuzla Airport and if this were to happen it would never take off again," Tanjug News Agency quoted him as saying.

NATO recently offered to lend air support to the United Nations to force the reopening of Tuzla Airport to fly in emergency supplies to Muslims.

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali, whose green light is needed prior to any NATO strikes, has said he will authorise the use of air power if U.N. troops are attacked.

In a separate development, reported Monday from

Sarajevo, U.N. observers succeeded in reaching Here, a Muslim village in central Bosnia where Bosnian government forces had accused the Bosnian Croat militia of massacring 25 civilians.

The military observers who entered the village Saturday found no evidence of a massacre, said U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) spokesman Bill Aikman in the Bosnian capital.

The village had been shelled and most of the civilian population had fled before heavy fighting last week, Col. Aikman said.

Reports of 25 victims were in line with expected casualty levels from the fighting itself, and there was no evidence of a massacre as such, the spokesman added.

Meanwhile, the police probe into the murder of a British aid worker near Zenica Thursday continued, said U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees spokesman Chris Janowski.

People currently being questioned by local police were not implicated in the killing but would hopefully provide information leading to the capture of the perpetrators, Mr. Janowski added.



In fresh snow, a young Muslim boy takes aim over old grave marks as he hunts small birds in the old town section of Sarajevo to supplement the meagre diet allotted by relief (AFP photo)

U.S. gives visa to Sinn Fein leader

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States has granted a limited visa to Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Fein, the Northern Irish political party that supports the outlawed Irish Republican Army (IRA).

The White House said it made the decision Sunday to support recent progress in negotiations to end decades of civil strife in Northern Ireland. The step will permit Mr. Adams to attend a New York conference.

President Bill Clinton "supports this difficult decision and believes it will help advance the cause of peace in Northern Ireland," the White House said in a statement.

Mr. Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher discussed the issue several times before the decision was made, State Department spokesman David Johnson said.

The White House said Attorney General Janet Reno, at the recommendation of Mr. Christopher, issued a "waiver to Gerry Adams' ineligibility" to allow Mr. Adams to attend a conference Tuesday on Northern Ireland.

Sundance gives top honours to a 2 character film

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah (R) — A film featuring a Harvard Law School dropout and a secretary from the Bronx who meet at work took top feature honours at this year's Sundance Film Festival, which ended its 10-day run Sunday. The film, What Happened Was, takes places entirely in the woman's Manhattan loft apartment and was produced by Tom Noonan, who also starred in the film. In the end the characters' diverse backgrounds render their relationship a mismatch. The film, which won the Grand Prize, was among the more than 90 feature films and 70 short subjects shown during the 10-day attendance-record-breaking festival. When actor-director Robert Redford's Sundance Institute took over the then-U.S. film festival a decade ago, about 400 people showed up. Festival promoters said Sunday about 65,000 tickets were sold for this year's presentations, about 10 per cent more than a year ago. Freedom On My Mind, a film about the civil rights movement, took the Grand Prize in the Documentary Category. Spanking The Monkey, a dark tale about an affair between a college student and his mother, won the Audience Prize in the Dramatic Category. Hoop Dreams, which chronicles the lives of two Chicago-area high school basketball players, captured the Audience Award in the Documentary Category. The event is internationally recognised as the single most important showcase of American independent cinema. It draws thousands of producers, directors, actors and cinematographers to the trendy, former mining town of Park City, just east of Salt Lake City.

Nationalist wins in Crimea; plans closer Russia ties

YALTA, Ukraine (R) — Russian nationalist Yuri Meshkov, who easily won a weekend presidential election in Ukraine's explosive Crimean peninsula, pledged Monday to build a close alliance with Russia.

But Mr. Meshkov, a long-time advocate for easing Ukraine's control over the region, said there would be no violence or "hasty steps" if outside forces did not interfere in Crimea.

Central Election Commission members in Crimea's main centre, Simferopol, said Mr. Meshkov won 72.92 per cent of the vote in Sunday's run-off vote. His opponent Nikolai Bagrov, who called for more autonomy under Ukrainian rule, got 23.35 per cent.

The outcome looks likely to complicate already delicate relations between Russia and Ukraine, which have often been at loggerheads since the Soviet Union broke up in 1991.

Mr. Meshkov, speaking at dawn to reporters at his plush and heavily-guarded residence outside the Black Sea resort of Yalta, said there would be no rush to statehood for Crimea.

"This is a vote for restoring broken links (with Russia) but not a return to the old Soviet Union. The first thing we will do is conclude a military-political pact with Russia and greatly improve our relations with Ukraine," he said.

"We have no ambitions to see Crimea as a state with borders and other state features. Before us is a real, tough task — surviving in the world collapsing around us."

He repeated his pledge to make the Russian rouble a freely circulating currency in Crimea.

Mr. Meshkov has acknowledged that the overwhelming support for him reflects the

desperate hopes of voters looking to Russia for economic relief rather than strong pro-Russian national feeling.

One-third of voters were pensioners, worst hit by 80 per cent monthly inflation and collapsing output.

Throughout most of the election campaign, Mr. Meshkov called for Crimea to rejoin Russia, which ran the area for much of the Soviet era. About 70 per cent of the peninsula's 2.7 million residents are ethnic Russians.

But after a strong showing in the election's first round two weeks ago, he moderated his stand and called only for an election next month to determine Crimea's future status.

"If no one forces us to implement our sovereignty quickly in practical terms, we will take no hasty moves," said Mr. Meshkov, surrounded by about 20 guards armed with submachineguns.

But he denied suggestions by Ukrainian politicians that his election could lead to the kind of violence seen in other ethnic enclaves, like Moldova's Dnestr Region.

"There is no such alarm in Crimea. We are more concerned about the possibility of destabilisation from outside," he said.

"If there is no force, Crimea will be peaceful."

The election campaign was marked by violence virtually unknown in Soviet times.

Six local personalities were murdered in unexplained circumstances, including a prominent member of Crimea's 280,000 native Tatar community shot dead in a street ambush.

Tatars said on election day they did not trust Mr. Meshkov and made clear they would not recognise anyone who stood for changing borders.

Japan denies having nuclear weapons programme

TOKYO (R) — Japan has no plans to break its long-standing principles barring the development of nuclear weapons, a Defence Ministry spokesman said Monday.

He was commenting on a London newspaper article which quoted a secret British government report as saying Japan had acquired all the parts needed for a nuclear bomb and might even have built one, needing only enriched plutonium for completion.

"We have no plans to break our three non-nuclear principles," the spokesman said. "There are no plans to develop such weapons."

The Japanese government has long pledged to abide by its 30-year-old principles banning the production, possession or introduction of nuclear weapons.

The Sunday Times said the report warned the British government that the crisis over North Korea's nuclear and missile programme was threatening to force Japan to abandon its non-nuclear stance.

Many military experts say Japan has long had the technology to build both nuclear warheads and the missiles to deliver them.

It also has a strategic policy of stockpiling enriched plutonium for its anticipated nuclear power station needs in the 21st century.

"Japan could readily make a crude nuclear weapon," military analyst Haruo Fujii said. "In addition, the missile technology here is very advanced."

The first all-Japanese satellite launch rocket, the H-II, is due to lift off Tuesday for a first test flight.

Seoul: War games to go on if no inspections

SEOUL (Agencies) — South Korea will hold major military exercises with the United States this year unless North Korea allows inspections of its suspect nuclear sites, a Defence Ministry spokesman said Monday.

The stakes in the North-South diplomatic standoff were further raised by unconfirmed news reports Monday that Seoul had decided to add three submarines to its fleet.

The spokesman said Washington and Seoul had agreed to scrap the annual Team Spirit military exercise only if Pyongyang took steps to prove it was not developing nuclear arms.

"Our position is that unless the North agrees to full nuclear inspections, Team Spirit will be held this year, although the March schedule might be rearranged," he said.

North Korea denies developing nuclear arms but has fiercely resisted demands by the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to allow its experts to judge for themselves.

The Seoul spokesman's comment came amid warnings by North Korea that the United

States and South Korea must decide whether the row over nuclear inspections will end in dialogue or war.

Pyeonggang calls Team Spirit a rehearsal for invasion and has long demanded it be scrapped.

In overnight statements, it reacted angrily to plans to deploy Patriot missile-defence batteries in the South and what it said were U.S. moves to increase intelligence-gathering on the peninsula.

"The military and intelligence measures taken by the United States (are) far removed from peaceful negotiation and are premeditated provocative manoeuvres which will bring the situation of the Korean peninsula to an extremely reckless phase of war," said a statement carried by its Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

South Korean and U.S. officials are increasingly impatient with lack of progress in talks with Pyongyang to allow inspections of suspect nuclear sites. The United States has suggested possible U.N. sanctions.

The IAEA said it was still

awaiting Pyongyang's response to its demands for access to certify no nuclear material had been diverted to the suspect programme.

Seoul's top opposition leader Monday criticised U.S. plans to send anti-missile weapons to South Korea, and the prime minister said separately it wasn't a sign of growing tension.

Prime Minister Lee Hoi-Chang, denying reports the Patriot missile were being sent in response to a growing threat from North Korea, said the move had been planned for several years. "Military tensions on the Korean peninsula have not deteriorated," he told reporters.

Lee Ki-Taik, leader of the opposition Democratic Party, said the timing of the plan was "not appropriate" and would hamper attempts to get North Korea to submit to international nuclear inspections.

Mr. Lee, the opposition leader, said he was certain the dispute would be resolved through negotiations.

"Many people, including me, doubt whether it is desirable to increase tension at this time," he said.

7 killed in Dhaka post-election violence

DHAKA (R) — At least seven people were killed and 24 wounded when shooting erupted in the Bangladesh capital Dhaka Monday over crucial city election results, doctors and witnesses said.

"It's a massacre and bodies are badly mutilated," one doctor said after the shootings. He said several of the wounded were in a critical condition.

Witnesses said the shootings followed hours of tension in a city district where the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party's candidate for ward commissioner, Abdul Aziz, lost.

They said supporters of Mr. Aziz started shooting randomly at local residents shortly before midnight. "The victims fell like hunted birds," one witness said.

Violence also broke out in

another district where the opposition Awami League's candidate for ward commissioner, Mosharrar Hossain, was defeated.

His supporters "went on a rampage, detonating hundreds of home-made bombs," a local resident said. Several people were injured in that incident, a police officer said.

Two people had been killed and nearly 60 injured in the poll violence Sunday.

The violence broke out despite the deployment of more than 30,000 police and paramilitary soldiers at polling stations in the four cities holding elections and a government crackdown on the unauthorised carrying of arms.

Major parties fiercely contested the local polls, seen as an important test of public

opinion before general elections due in 1996.

The Election Commission said it would formally announce the results in the four cities after voting in 28 centres in Dhaka where polling was postponed due to violence.

The Awami mayoral candidate in Dhaka, Mohammad Hanif, was leading against his main rival Mirza Abbas of the ruling BNP by Monday afternoon, the commission said.

The Awami mayoral candidate in Chittagong, Mohiuddin Chowdhury, also maintained an unassailable lead against his BNP rival Mir Nasiruddin, election officials said.

BNP mayoral candidates Mizanur Rahman Minu and Sheikh Tayebur Rahman won comfortably in Rajshahi and Khulna, respectively.

Kyrgyz president wins landslide in referendum

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan (R) — Kyrgyzstan President Askar Akayev has won a resounding referendum victory in this former Soviet republic, endorsing his plan for faster capitalist reforms, results Monday showed.

Officials said Mr. Akayev, a former mathematics professor, had gained 96 per cent of the vote, giving him the mandate he sought to push through reforms and override objections from an ex-Communist parliament.

"These are preliminary figures but our president has won a great victory," Abdrysav Baktybek, an official in the president's office, told Reuters.

The official turnout was 95.3 per cent of the 2.2 million electorate scattered through this remote Central Asian state on China's mountainous north-west frontier.

Referendum ballots posed the question whether Mr. Akayev should be allowed to finish a term ending in 1996, by which time he hopes this impoverished state will be on its way to becoming "Asia's Switzerland."

A senior official in charge of privatisation said that the mainstay of Mr. Akayev's policies was a plan to transform at

least half the economy from state to private ownership by 1996.

Nina Kirichenko, head of the privatisation Department in Kyrgyzstan's State Property Fund, said about 15 per cent of the economy had moved into private hands so far.

"According to the new plan, by January 1996 about 50 per cent of the economy will be privatised," Ms. Kirichenko told Reuters in an interview.

She said this year Kyrgyzstan would begin tackling the problem of privatising large-scale industries and selling off 25 per cent of the shares in auctions open to the public.

The reforms, guided by conditions attached to lending from the International Monetary Fund, have already won plaudits from Western leaders, including U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Turkey, Japan, the United States and other nations have also supplied credits since Kyrgyzstan gained independence from the former Soviet Union in late 1991.

But the free market reforms began to falter late last year and Mr. Akayev's prime minister and cabinet were forced by parliament to resign against the president's wishes in December.

S. Africans on deadline for poll accord

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies) — The government and the African National Congress (ANC) gave black and white rightists a Monday deadline to reach an agreement opening the way for them to take part in the first elections for all South Africans.

Negotiators met the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party, still bent on boycotting the April 27 elections, and a core of white hardliners refusing to rule out violence in their quest for self-determination.

Government spokesman Izak Reelief said the government and the ANC set Monday as a final deadline for an agreement with the right wing but he added that there was no legal hurdle to further discussions.

Communist Party negotiator Joe Slovo said in a radio interview he was pessimistic about a breakthrough in the three-month stalemate between the government, ANC and the conservative Freedom Alliance.

But he added: "While there's talk, there's life."

Any deal would have to be submitted to a special sitting of parliament to amend the new

constitution drawn up by a forum of political parties.

The Freedom Alliance, linking right-wing whites and some black homeland leaders including Zulu chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkathu, boycotted those talks.

The Afrikaner People's Front (APF), which seeks a separate white homeland in a post-apartheid South Africa, began talks with chief government negotiator Roelf Meyer early Monday.

Alliance chief negotiator Rowan Cownie arrived later with a separate delegation including Zulu leaders, Mr. Reelief said.

The APF, led by former military chief Constand Viljoen, negotiates independently with the government but is also part of the Freedom Alliance, which demands greater autonomy than the limited self-rule proposed in December's interim constitution.

Several thousand right-wing Afrikaners met Saturday to form a "transitional authority."

Its president, Conservative party leader Ferdi Hartzen-

berg, said that if his followers could not achieve independence peacefully they would take it by other means.

Inkatha leaders voted at the weekend not to take part in the election if their constitutional demands are not met. But Mr. Buthelezi hinted in a television interview Sunday that he might relent if a key voting provision is changed.

The present constitution proposes a single vote in April for national and regional legislatures. Mr. Buthelezi wants a double ballot that could benefit his Inkatha party in his Natal province stronghold.

Mr. Reelief said all appeared to be committed to a negotiated settlement.

"I don't think the door is closed on any of the issues on the table," he said.

ANC leader Nelson Mandela appealed to right-wing whites Sunday to avoid any action which could provoke conflict.

Mr. Mandela, launching his campaign to become South Africa's first black president, has told township supporters to forget any dreams of a quick

end to their poverty.

"Please be patient," he said Sunday during one of four stops on a hectic first day of campaigning that took him on a broad sweep through Western Transvaal province.

"Don't think that on April 28 you will be able to drive a Mercedes," he told a crowd of about 8,000 in a black township outside Klerksdorp, referring to the day after South Africans of all races go to the polls together for the first time.

Mandela's ANC — expected to win the election with around two-thirds of the vote — has outlined a labour-intensive public works programme to help provide jobs and training for millions of jobless blacks.

Over-ambitious expectations on the part of impoverished blacks in South Africa's townships are regarded as one of the greatest challenges facing an ANC government.

Mr. Mandela is spending two days campaigning in the Western Transvaal, heartland of right-wing white farmers who have vowed to fight rather than submit to black rule.

Law And Order's Moriarty quits over 'censorship'

NEW YORK (R) — Actor Michael Moriarty, an outspoken defender of the right to portray violence on television, has quit NBC-TV's Law and Order series, accusing NBC of trying to censor his views after he said he had been pulled from two talk shows, his spokesman said Sunday. "It's obvious that the network is trying to censor him and his views," his spokesman, Gary Springer, said in a statement. Moriarty, who plays the lead prosecutor on the highly-rated crime drama, has been a strong advocate of first amendment rights to portray violence on TV. The actor charged that in blocking his appearance on Now and the Today shows, the network was infringing on his rights of free speech. But network spokeswoman Alexandra Constantinople denied the charge. "Mr. Moriarty was never confirmed or scheduled to appear on Now," she told Reuters. "We had looked at doing a profile on him but nothing was set," she said. "We have not ruled out doing something on him in the future." However, the spokeswoman did admit that Moriarty and Republican Senator Keni Conrad of Nebraska had been bumped from a scheduled debate on the Today show last Wednesday on "should media violence be censored?" "At the last moment the Today show booked FCC Chairman Reed Hundt who had just given an impassioned speech in Miami on the issue of media violence and censorship," she said. "In news, and both of these programmes are in the news division, everything is subject to last-minute changes. We simply went for something more timely because Hundt had just given the speech," she added. The Today show had looked at a number of issues on violence and crime in America last week, she said. The resignation came as a surprise to Law And Order producers, a network source said.

Tired rapist wakes up to arrest

GRENOBLE, France (AFP) — A rapist who fell asleep in the bed of the woman he had just attacked at knife-point woke to find himself under arrest, police in the southwestern French town of Grenoble said Sunday. The woman, who was living in university accommodation in the village near Grenoble, had opened the door to the man who she thought was a friend. He then threatened her with a knife and raped her but when the attacker fell asleep on her bed the woman escaped and alerted a friend. Police arrested the man, who was not identified.

Cowboys win Super Bowl with huge 2nd half

ATLANTA (AP) — The Dallas Cowboys and the Buffalo Bills played for Super Bowl history Sunday, and they both got it.

The Cowboys won their second straight National Football League (NFL) championship and were proclaimed the team of the '90s. The Bills lost in the title game for the fourth straight time, something no team has ever done in any sport.

Dallas found its spark in two unlikely stars, James Washington and Leon Lett.

Washington, a backup safety, had a hand in 17 of Dallas' points as they beat the Bills for the second year in a row, this time 30-13. By becoming four-time losers, the Bills did what no franchise in history has ever done — lose a championship game four straight times.

While commissioner Paul Tagliabue used the "team of the '90s" label as he presented the Vince Lombardi trophy to coach Jimmy Johnson and owner Jerry Jones of the Cowboys, Dallas players were more reticent.

"It's too early," said defensive end Charles Haley, who played on San Francisco's "Team of the '80s." He said: "Let's see what we do next year."

In the Buffalo locker room, someone said jokingly "Oh for five in '95."

But that only covered up the pain.

"How difficult is it?" asked linebacker Darryl Talley. "It hurts. It hurts deeply."

Emmitt Smith, who surprisingly was named the game's MVP over Washington, ran for 132 yards and two touchdowns.



Dallas Cowboys running back Emmitt Smith (22) is pushed into the endzone by Buffalo Bills Thomas Smith during the 3rd quarter of the Super Bowl game (AFP)

as Dallas became the 10th straight team to win the league's title game by outscoring the Bills 24-0 in the second half after trailing 13-6 at halftime.

But it was Washington who turned the game as the Cowboys became just the fifth team to win in consecutive years and tied San Francisco and Pittsburgh with four Super Bowl victories.

Washington, who started only because Dallas used five backs against Buffalo's three wide-receiver offense, returned a fumble 46 yards for a touchdown, intercepted a pass in the fourth quarter that led to another score, and forced a first-half fumble that led to a field goal. Both fumbles were

by Buffalo's star running back, Thurman Thomas, whose frustration seemed to symbolize the entire team's — he finished with just 37 yards in 16 carries.

The most important of those turnovers was the work of Lett, who stripped Thomas of the ball on the third play of the second half with Buffalo holding a 13-6 lead.

Washington, whose interception led to Dallas' first touchdown in last year's 52-17 rout of Buffalo, picked it up and rambled in for the touchdown that tied the game, changed the momentum forever and guaranteed Buffalo its place in NFL history.

Smith rushed for 61 of his yards on the next drive, scoring from 15 yards out to give Dal-

las a 20-13 lead. Lett, Haley, Jim Jeffcoat and Darren Woodson, meanwhile, all made big defensive plays to shut down a Buffalo offense that had rung up 216 yards in the first half but got just 98 after intermission.

It was not a great day for Troy Aikman, last year's MVP.

The Dallas quarterback was 19 of 27 for 207 yards, but couldn't get the ball in the end zone in the first half, when Buffalo's Jim Kelly was moving the ball up and down the field with ease, passing for 176 yards before intermission. But Kelly finished with just 260 yards on 31 of 50 passing.

Smith, the league's MVP in the regular season, added the Super Bowl MVP award to his collection.

After being held to 41 yards on 10 carries in the first half, he took over after Lett and Washington had combined to tie it and Jeffcoat and Haley had combined on a 13-yard sack of Kelly on Buffalo's next series.

Dallas then got the ball on its own 36 and Smith carried for 9 yards, then ran for 3 yards, then 9, 14 and 4. After Aikman hit Darryl Johnston for 3 yards, Johnston dashed 15 yards up the middle on third and three for the score that gave Dallas the lead for good.

Smith scored again from a yard out 5:10 into the fourth quarter after Washington had returned an interception 12 yards to the 34.

Eddie Murray, who had field goals of 41 and 34 yards in the first half, added a 20-yarder with 2:50 left, leaving Buffalo to start over next year.

International Ski Federation president wants speed restrictions for women

VIENNA (AFP) — The president of the International Ski Federation (FIS) Monday called for speed restrictions on women racers following the death of Austrian star Ulrike Maier.

"It has become imperative to check the speed of women," Marc Hodler told Austrian Radio. But he would not say what measures would be taken or considered.

The federation has been forced on the defensive after being threatened with legal action by Maier's fiancé after her death in a crash during the Garmisch Partenkirchen downhill Saturday.

Maier, a two-time former giant slalom world champion, fell at more than 100 kilometres an hour and burst into a timing post and bank of snow. She suffered a broken neck and other severe internal injuries.

The skier will be buried in her home village of Rauris near Salzburg Thursday, it was officially announced. The federation is to organise a special event to raise money for Maier's four year old daughter Melanie.

But preliminary work on legal proceedings has already started. Maier's boyfriend Hubert Schweighofer, the father of Melanie, criticised safety measures at Garmisch and threatened action.

The skier's lawyer, Harald Lettner, said Monday that three areas of concern would be highlighted. He said some of the safety installations were 50 years old, the timing post that Maier struck was on the narrowest part of the Kandahar slope and FIS safety chief Jan Tschiesner was absent.

Hodler said in the radio interview: "It is impossible to foresee everything and protect against every risk."

But he admitted that he was "concerned," about state of the art equipment and ski suits that had cut times.

"We had hoped that the safety measures would be sufficient," said Hodler. "It was the women themselves who wanted to race on the slopes used by the men."

Maier had reportedly expressed concern about the Garmisch slope before Saturday's race. She was reported to have told a Swiss local radio station: "The run is brutally icy, something must be done because otherwise it is too dangerous."



Photo up shows Austria's downhill skier Ulrike Maier on a stretcher after she struck a timing post during the women's World Cup downhill event Jan. 29. Below is a file photo of Maier giving a kiss to her then two-year-old daughter Melanie carried by fiancé Hubert Schweighofer (AFP)



Maier's death. Saturday's downhill will be on the Kandahar slope on which Maier was killed. A slalom will be held Sunday.

Gilliooly said to implicate Harding after she named him

PORTLAND, Ore. (R) — Skating star Tonya Harding's ex-husband implicated her in a plot to attack Nancy Kerrigan only after FBI agents showed him a statement by her linking him to the attack, a news report said Sunday.

The Oregonian newspaper quoted Jeff Gilliooly's brother, John, as saying Gilliooly was stunned that Harding had abandoned a "cover story" the couple had discussed.

It said Gilliooly's attorney had tried for some time to convince him that Harding had turned on him, but Gilliooly did not believe it until the FBI showed him a deposition that Harding made during a meeting with agents Jan. 18.

Gilliooly was arrested Jan. 19 in connection with the Jan. 6 attack on Kerrigan, Harding's rival for a spot on the U.S. Olympic team.

The Oregonian quoted Gilliooly's attorney, Ron Hoevet, as saying the brother's version was accurate.

"Jeff would have fallen on his sword for Tonya, if Tonya had told him the truth, but she didn't," it quoted Hoevet as saying.

Gilliooly persisted for some time in believing Harding would not implicate him, Hoevet said, but when authorities showed Gilliooly her 46-page deposition, "That finally convinced Jeff that Tonya had implicated him."

Hoevet could not be reached for comment Sunday.

Gilliooly has negotiated a plea bargain with authorities under which he will testify that Harding was involved in the Kerrigan plot from the beginning, according to reports.

The reports, which have not been officially confirmed, say Gilliooly will plead guilty to a charge of racketeering and be sentenced to two years in prison and a \$100,000 fine for his part in the plot.

Kerrigan was smashed in the leg by a man wielding a metal club and knocked out of the national championships in Detroit, which were also to decide who would go to the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway, next month.

Harding, 23, insists she is innocent, although she has admitted that she kept silent for days after learning that people close to her were involved in the attack.

Russian federation head confident mutiny will end

MOSCOW (R) — The head of Russia's soccer federation says he is confident that several of the players who are refusing to play for national team coach Pavel Sadryin will return to the squad in time for this year's World Cup finals.

Vyacheslav Koloskov told the weekend edition of Sport Express newspaper he was sure a number of the team, many of whom play for leading European clubs, would change their minds.

The 14 rebels, who complain they are not being paid enough for playing for the Russian side and say Sadryin should be sacked for incompetence, have boycotted the team's current trip to the United States and Mexico.

But Koloskov said Benfica striker Sergei Yuran and Dynamo Dresden keeper Stanislav Cherechov were bound to relent.

"Saying this, I am relying on my intuition and my knowledge of these people," he told the newspaper.

Chelsea goalkeeper Dmitry Kharin and Manchester United winger Andrei Kanehelskis were also sure to play, Koloskov said. He added that he had a feeling Karlsruhe striker Sergei Kiryakov, one of the rebels' ringleaders, would return to the fold.

"Soccer is all that matters to

him in life. I've known him for 13 years, he went to school with my son," Koloskov said.

The powerful contingent from champions Spartak Moscow, who make up most of the defence, has also vowed not to turn out for the national side but Koloskov said he was convinced they too would change their minds.

The federation has refused to bow to players' pressure for Sadryin's replacement by former Soviet national coach Anatoly Byshovets, dismissed after the poor performance of the commonwealth side in the 1992 European Championship.

Koloskov said he would consider removing Sadryin only if no players turned up when the squad was due to gather in May or if he felt the final team would shame the country.

The young Russian side had been tipped to do well in the finals in the United States but the unprecedented mutiny looks like wrecking their chances.

Only 18 players out of more than 40 invited arrived in Moscow to train before the squad left to play friendlies against the United States and Mexico. The decline in standards was obvious when the makeshift team scrambled a 1-1 draw with the United States Saturday.

14-year-old is youngest ever chess grandmaster

WIJK AAN ZEE, Netherlands (R) — 14-year-old Pieter Leko of Hungary became the youngest chess grandmaster in history Sunday by finishing third in the elite Wijk Aan Zee grandmasters tournament.

Leko, born in September 1979, broke the record set in 1991 by another Hungarian, Judit Polgar, by 14 months. Only Polgar and former world champion Bobby Fischer of the United States have become grandmasters at the age of 15.

Leko's performance in the Dutch coastal town of Wijk Aan Zee was the third world class result he needed to be awarded the grandmaster title

by the World Chess Federation. His earlier grandmaster-level results had been in Budapest and Leon, Spain, in 1993.

The modest 14-year-old, who lives in the town of Szeged on the Hungarian-Yugoslav border with his mother, grandmother and brother, admitted that he was extremely nervous before his key final round draw against the tournament winner, Bosnian number one Predrag Nikolic.

"I only slept for six hours last night," Leko said after his early draw offer had been accepted by Nikolic. "I was certainly not calm."

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THE HEART OF THE MATTER

Both vulnerable. North deals.
NORTH
♠ Q J 6 4
♥ K Q 6 5
♦ 7 5
♣ K 7 6
WEST
♠ 7 2
♥ A 7 3 2
♦ Q 10 6 3 2
♣ Q 9 4
EAST
♠ A 7 3 2
♥ A 7 3 2
♦ J 9 6 4
♣ A J 10 3

SOUTH
♠ A K 10 8 5 3
♥ 9 4
♦ A K
♣ 8 5 2
The bidding:
North East South West
Pass Pass 1 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♣
There are no rewards for finding the obvious line of play at the table. The art lies in digging up the best method.
North's hand was on the borderline of an invitational raise to three spades and a leap to game. Since the hand was useless and lacking in intermediate, North wisely elected to take the more conservative course. South had plenty in reserve to accept.

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CONCORD '1'
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Israeli-Palestinian hotel to be built

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli-Palestinian hotel will be built by the Dead Sea as part of the Palestinian self-rule plan for the Jericho area, the West Bank, officials said here Monday. Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat agreed on the project during their weekend talks in Davos, Switzerland, a senior government official said. The hotel's exact location has not yet been decided. The Israeli daily Haaretz said the hotel would be built near Qumran, where the Dead Sea scrolls were discovered in 1947, but there will be no Palestinian corridor linking it with the autonomous Jericho area.

Germany quadruples guarantees for Lebanon

BEIRUT (AFP) — Germany has quadrupled its credit guarantees on exports to Lebanon, the German embassy said here Monday. "This decision reflects the growing faith in the political and economic development of Lebanon," it said in a statement. As of Jan. 1, German credit guarantees on exports to Lebanon have been raised from five million German marks to 20 million marks, the statement said.

3 acquitted in Iraqi chemical arms case

DARMSTADT, Germany (AFP) — Three German businessmen were freed Monday after being not guilty of illegally exporting chemical arms making material to Iraq. At the end of a trial which began in April last year, the three businessmen were acquitted after the court ruled that material which they supplied could have had a number of uses. Prosecutors had accused the three of illegally supplying the material between 1984 and 1986. If convicted, the men — all employees of a German company, Karl Kolb — could have faced 15 year prison sentences.

Turkish politician attacked in Greece

ATHENS (AFP) — A visiting Turkish politician and members of his delegation were attacked over the weekend by Greek Orthodox Christians in northeastern Greece, representatives of the Greek Muslim community said Monday. Deniz Baykal, leader of the Turkish Republican Party, along with five members of his delegation and four members of the Greek Muslim minority were set upon by 150 to 200 people protesting the visit Sunday to Xanthi. Mr. Baykal sought refuge in a bus which was stoned by the mob, the sources said. Government spokesman Evangelos Venizelos Monday termed the attack "deplorable," adding that it was the work of "isolated groups."

French novelist Pierre Boule dies

PARIS (R) — French novelist Pierre Boule, whose novels "Bridge on the River Kwai" and "Planet of the Apes" were turned into screen blockbusters, has died aged 81, his publisher said Monday. A spokeswoman for Editions Julliard said Mr. Boule, who would have turned 82 next month, had been very sick for time. She had no further information. Born in Southern France, Boule was trained as an engineer and worked on Malaysian rubber plantations in the 1930s before trying his hand at writing.

Fire destroys Barcelona landmark theater

BARCELONA (AP) — Fire destroyed the 145-year-old Gran Teatre del Llicon Monday, less than a year before Spain's leading musical landmark was to undergo a major restoration, director Josep Caminal said. A fire department spokesman said the cause of the blaze in the theater on Barcelona's picturesque Ramblas Boulevard was not known. It broke out shortly after 11 a.m. (1000 GMT) in the area behind the opera theater's stage. Mr. Caminal told reporters he thought a spark from a blowtorch had started the fire that spread quickly above the new steel fire curtain to the building's partially wooden roof. The fire curtain was installed during a recent partial restoration. By noon the fire had swept throughout the building, causing much of the roof to collapse, a fire department spokesman said.

Flatto Sharon free on bail

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A French-Israeli businessman, Samuel Flatto Sharon, arrested last week on suspicion of fraud, was released on bail of \$170,000 Monday, judicial officials said here. The Tel Aviv district court, however, banned Mr. Flatto Sharon from leaving Israel. Investigators arrested the businessman last Tuesday on suspicion that he defrauded a French gemstone company, Flamande-S.A. Mr. Flatto Sharon allegedly made use of an Israeli company's name to import gemstones into Israel without informing the company. The fraud came to light following a joint investigation by French and Israeli police.

4 charged with inciting Djibouti revolt

DJIBOUTI (R) — Four members of an outlawed opposition group were charged on Sunday with advocating armed rebellion in Djibouti, witnesses said. The four, members of the Djibouti United Opposition Front (FUOD), were arrested on Saturday, one week after they attended a conference in neighbouring Ethiopia. The meeting, which produced a declaration calling for the overthrow of the Djibouti government, was organised by their party and another Djibouti opposition group, the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD). All four were remanded in custody after appearing in court. They were named as FUOD Chairman Mohammad Ahmad Issa and three of his aides, Galal Abdul Rahman Ahmad, Kamili Ali Mohammad, and Mahdi Ahmad Ibrahim God. Police dispersed a crowd of about 50 FUOD supporters from outside the court, the witnesses said. There were no casualties or arrests. The four were charged with "incitement to armed gathering without any effect," which under Djibouti law carries a maximum sentence of one year in jail. Both opposition groups are supported by the Afar tribal group, which claims unfair discrimination by the Issa group, which dominates the government, and to which President Hassan Gouled Aptidon belongs. The president has led Djibouti since independence in 1977. Both tribal groups are similar to numerical support. FRUD has been conducting a guerrilla war in northern Djibouti for the past two years, with the aim of overthrowing the government.

Kuwait magazine urges boycott of France

KUWAIT (R) — A Kuwaiti magazine said Islamic countries should consider imposing a boycott on France to force its authorities to respect the rights of Muslims there. "Had one Islamic state boycotted France for its deeds, it would have adhered (to what is right)." So what would it be like with dozens of Muslim countries, which can force the whole west to respect the rules and the sons of this religion?" the weekly Al Mujtama'a said in its Feb. 1 edition. The editorial did not elaborate on what kind of boycott it envisaged. The weekly reflects the views of Kuwait's Islamic Constitutional Movement, widely known to be a branch of the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood movement. "The intensity of France's antagonistic attitude towards French Muslims has increased in a naked form during the past few months. It moved from mere statements and indications to actual acts that nail the beliefs of Muslims," said Al Mujtama'a. The editorial included a list of instances of what it called "French hatred driven by crusader concepts of dealing with French Muslims and Muslim expatriates." It said the most significant of those was the expelling of two Muslim girls from a school after they insisted on wearing a head covering. Al Mujtama'a also said the use of Koranic verses to embroil a low-cut dress worn by model Claudia Schiffer at a show staged by the Chanel fashion house in Paris this month had "upset all Muslims."

Palestinian Development Bank ready to function

By Sana Attieh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Palestinian Development Bank is ready to start work as soon as the Oslo accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is implemented, according to official PLO sources.

The development bank shareholders are ready to pay the initial capital of \$200 million as soon as a Palestinian authority takes over from the Israeli occupation authorities in Jericho and the Gaza Strip, said Jawad Naji, head of the PLO economic department in Amman.

"All the necessary work for the Palestinian Development Bank has been finalised and is ready for implementation," Dr. Naji told the Jordan Times in an interview.

He said that the PLO leadership in Tunis had taken a decision for the establishment of the development bank and proposed its speedy formation.

The PLO official added that a large group of Palestinian businessmen, whom he refused to name, had pledged the initial capital of \$200 million after the Oslo accord was signed in

Washington last September.

He said that the key shareholders were private sector businessmen and the Palestinian authority (government), but that the bank might open its shareholding doors for international financial institutions.

Dr. Naji said that the bank will focus its priorities on projects related to the rebuilding of the infrastructure, a field which had been neglected in the occupied territories since 1967.

"The bank will provide loans and financial facilities to the private sector and investors for projects in the field of industry, agriculture, tourism and infrastructure, such as housing," Dr. Naji said, adding that the bank is expected to serve the whole of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"But, naturally, we cannot expect this bank to be responsible for the rebuilding of the infrastructure," Dr. Naji said, pointing out that the Palestinian development plan for the next seven years set the needed investment for infrastructure reconstruction at \$11.6 billion in the occupied territories.

At an international confer-

ence on financial support for Middle East peace in Washington last October donors pledged \$2.4 billion for the territories in the next five years. An amount of \$570 million for 1994 was allocated to infrastructure projects such as roads, water, sewage, electricity and hospital and school building.

Dr. Naji said that in light of the economic agreement signed between the PLO and Jordan, the Palestinian Development Bank is expected to deal mostly in the Jordanian dinar, in addition to foreign currencies.

Jordan and the PLO signed an economic agreement in early January making the dinar the main currency used in the West Bank and Gaza and giving the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ), along with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian financial committee, the right to supervise the monetary activities of banks and other financial institutions there until a financial Palestinian authority was established.

While the agreement gave the Palestinians the right to independently establish their own banks, it was agreed that the eight Jordanian banks

reopen their 31 branches which were closed after Israel occupied the West Bank on June 5, 1967.

Dr. Naji also confirmed that in the first five years — an interim period of Palestinian self-rule in the occupied territories before a final settlement is reached with Israel — the bank is also expected to deal in the Israeli shekel.

"The Israeli shekel has been used in the West Bank and Gaza Strip since 1967, and is expected to continue to do so in the years of the interim period," Dr. Naji said.

The PLO official explained that the Palestinian authority in the autonomous area will have jurisdiction over the activities of the bank, with close coordination with the joint Jordanian-Palestinian financial committee, until a financial Palestinian monetary authority was formed.

However, Dr. Naji noted that negotiations were ongoing with Israel over the monetary authorities in the autonomous area, where the PLO insists that the Palestinians have the jurisdiction to supervise and monitor their financial policies and to establish their own monetary authority.

Iran demands apology, compensation from Turkey

TEHRAN (Agencies) — Iran Monday demanded a formal apology and compensation from Turkey for bombing border villages during an air strike on Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq.

Iran said nine people were killed and 19 others wounded when "several rockets and bombs" hit Nokan and Kanizard villages in the northwest during a Turkish strike on a Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) base in Iraq Friday.

"A formal apology and compensation for the families of the victims of the tragic event is the least the Iranian people expect," Deputy Foreign Minister Aladdin Borujerdi said in a meeting with Turkish Ambassador Korkmaz Haktanir.

He called "strongly" on Ankara to make sure future attacks on Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq do not "cause any damage" to Iranian villages even if the targets are close to the border, Tehran Radio said.

Witnesses to the bombing said "eliminate any doubts" Turkey might have about the truth of the Iranian reports, he added.

Mr. Haktanir called it a "regrettable incident" and assured Iranian officials that Turkey had targeted the PKK, the radio added.

"For this reason we have sent a team to witness the situation in coordination with Iranian officials," he was

quoted as saying. "Turkey would spare no efforts to compensate for losses and I will convey Iran's request to Ankara."

A three-man delegation arrived in Iran Monday to investigate damage done by the air raid.

"They left early this morning to investigate the damage done by the raid," Ankara spokesman Ferhat Ataman told Reuters. "They will stay as long as they need to reach a conclusion."

MR. Ataman denied press reports that Turkey had apologised to Iran for Friday's raid, which Prime Minister Tansu Ciller called the highest ever mounted by the Turkish air force in 10 years of fighting the PKK.

"There is no question of an apology," Mr. Ataman said. "We must wait to see what the probe throws up. It gave no more details."

The semi-official Tehran Times said meanwhile that Iran had expected a "clear explanation" from Ankara on how the villages in Azerbaijan province ended up being hit.

"But Turkey's explanations are not satisfactory at all," it said. "We hope Ankara would provide a more plausible account of the chain of events which led to the incursion into our territory."

Ankara should compensate the families of the victims, it said.

Missing Iranian Christian church leader found dead

TEHRAN (Agencies) — An Iranian bishop who reportedly went missing after criticising the government's treatment of the Christian minority in his country has been found dead.

Members of Bishop Haik Hovsepian's parish, Hovsepian of God, said Monday police emissaries informed them that their spiritual leader's body had been recovered.

They said they were notified of Mr. Hovsepian's death on Sunday, 11 days after he went missing on his way to the airport. But they said they did not know when or how he died.

"We don't know what caused the death," Henry Manoukian, an aide to the bishop told the Associated Press. "We were told an autopsy will be carried out today (Monday)."

However, Middle East Watch, which was first to report Mr. Hovsepian's disappearance on Jan. 19 and then the recovery of his body, said Sunday the bishop had died Jan. 20. Iranian officials, who have not commented on Mr. Hovsepian's disappearance, have yet to announce his death. The state media has ignored the issue.

Middle East Watch, a New York-based human rights group, quoted a statement issued by the Assemblies of God regional director in Cyprus as saying photographs of Mr. Hovsepian's body showed stitches in the abdomen, suggesting a post-mortem examination had been done.

It urged Iranian authorities to make their findings public

and to also allow an independent autopsy.

Asked what the impact of the news has had on the parish, Mr. Manoukian said: "We are worried that this may be directed against us." He refused to explain.

Middle East Watch said that there has been no explanation for the delay in informing Mr. Hovsepian's relatives and followers of his death.

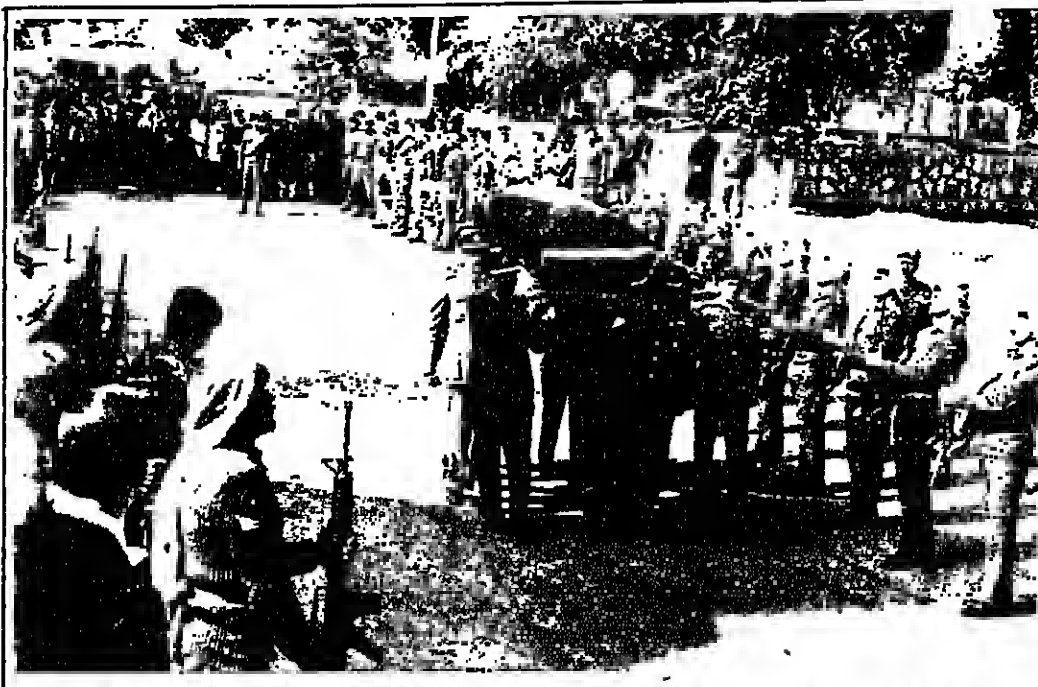
It said the bishop's body was found on a major Tehran street and taken to the city morgue shortly after the bishop's disappearance.

Official photographs of the body were identified by Mr. Hovsepian's son, Joseph, and two other Assemblies of God church officials in Iran, Middle East Watch said.

Middle East Watch said that according to a statement issued by the Assemblies of God, photographs of the corpse showed stitches round the stomach, suggesting that an autopsy may already have been carried out.

"If (this is) confirmed, the results of the... autopsy should be immediately released to Bishop Hovsepian's widow," the human rights group said, adding that the family should be allowed to take possession of the body if they wanted to.

The pastor disappeared shortly after leading a successful campaign to free fellow Assemblies of God clergyman, the Rev. Mehdi Dibaj, who had been sentenced to death for abandoning his Muslim faith.



FINAL TRIBUTE: Armed Forces officers Monday carry the body of the late air force chief, Major-General Awad Bilal, to the Royal Cemetery in Amman (Petra photo)

Palestinians reject arms control paper

CAIRO (AFP) — Palestinian negotiators at multilateral Middle East peace here Monday rejected a Russian-U.S. document on arms control, arguing that its wording ignored the Palestinian people and their rights.

"Ziad Abu Ziyad, head of the Palestinian delegation at the working group on security and arms control, said the

document was an "indirect attempt" to give a new interpretation to U.N. Resolution 242 on land for peace. He said it spoke generally of the "ban on seizing other people's land, without mentioning the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel."

By referring to "states in the region and failing to mention peoples" the document "total-

ly ignored the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights," Mr. Abu Ziyad said. "Any initiative aimed at settling relations between countries in the region must take account of the fact that another state — the Palestinian state — is being created."

Participants at the talks agreed to set up a committee to draw up a new document,

Breakthrough predicted in self-rule talks

(Continued from page 1)

The PLO ambassador to Cairo said in Amman Monday Israel and the PLO had drafted a compromise agreement solving the three key issues.

Said Kamal and other PLO officials said final agreement awaited Mr. Rabin's approval of the draft.

"Rabin has the final word now and reaching an agreement depends on his approval of the compromise reached between Peres and Arafat," Mr. Kamal told Reuters.

If Mr. Rabin approves the draft, Mr. Kamal said the expected both sides to initial the agreement within 10 days in Cairo. Egypt has invited Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat to Cairo.

Mr. Kamal said both sides agreed the area of Jewish settlement in the Gaza Strip would be 36 square kilometres and security would be provided by the Israeli army.

An extra 10 square kilometres of land Israel is including in a security zone for the settlements will come under Palestinian civilian administration but have Israeli patrols, he said.

Mr. Kamal said Israel refused to increase the area of Jericho to come under Palestinian rule above 55 square kilometres but had agreed to give Palestinians control of passages to the town from other areas.

Palestinians had earlier said the area of Jericho should be 340 kilometre and that they were promised by a third party that Israel would increase the areas.

"The Israeli delegation headed by Peres agreed to give Palestinians a safe passage, under the auspices of the Palestinian authority, from Jericho to Nabi Moussa, as well as a safe passage from

Jericho to the Dead Sea," Mr. Kamal said.

"It approved a Palestinian demand that they set up Palestinian projects and joint ventures with others (Jordan) on the Dead Sea," Mr. Kamal said.

"They have also approved a three-km safe passage from the (King Hussein) bridge to Jericho City, but religious affairs in the Shalom Al Israeli synagogue will be under the auspices of Israel," he added.

On the problem of border points between Egypt and the Gaza Strip and between Jordan and Jericho, Mr. Kamal said the two sides agreed to an invisible Israeli presence at the Gaza and Jericho terminals checking visitors to Palestinian self-rule areas.

However, Israelis could emerge to question any travellers, PLO officials said Israel had agreed to have a Palestinian lawyer present at investigations.

PLO officials said Israel initially sought to have soldiers checking identities of all Palestinians passing through the terminals.

Other PLO officials accused Israelis of reneging on an agreement reached in Oslo and Cairo to allow Palestinians to hoist their flag in terminals leading to Gaza Strip and Jericho.

PLO official Ahmad Qouria saw in Davos: "There are still some problems on the crossings... there has to be a real change for people crossing to maintain security but also to preserve the dignity of the Palestinians."

Yoel Zinger, the legal adviser to the foreign ministry and one of the Israeli delegation in Davos, was due to meet with Mr. Rabin to review the draft agreement, Israel Radio reported.

"I have seen the details of the draft agreement," said police Minister Moshe Shahal, saying that it showed "progress."

An Israeli official in Davos said Israeli agents would be able to see and hear "suspects" passing by Palestinian controls, but would be out of sight from the public.

Israeli reports also said a Palestinian lawyer would be present at all interrogations or searches.

A map published in the daily Maariv newspaper showed Palestinians in control of three sites outside the Jericho enclave, including a beach on the Dead Sea.

Israel Radio reported that a similar "outline agreement" had been reached on securing the roads to Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip.

"Right now, the situation is that there is agreement and understanding on most points," Mr. Ben-Eliezer said. "It is in its final technicalities."

The daily Haaretz quoted an unnamed Israeli delegate as saying Mr. Rabin was updated throughout the Davos talks. But it said Mr. Rabin was not enthusiastic but nonetheless gave a green light to Mr. Peres to go forward.

Mr. Beilin, Mr. Peres' deputy, said Israel could meet the target date of April 13 for completing a withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho if the talks in Cairo next weekend are a success.

"I think it will be possible to sign an accord after Sunday's meeting," Mr. Beilin said on Israel Radio.

"In any case, the negotiations should not take more than a few weeks, which would allow us to respect the six months time limit for negotiations and application of the accord."

Queen Mother steps out to church

SANDRINGHAM, England (AP) — Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, recovered from a lingering illness, made her first public appearance for three weeks when she went to church. A chest infection had prevented her from attending church for the past two Sundays. The Queen Mother, 93, used a cane as she walked from her car to the church in Sandringham, a village 115 miles (185 kms) northeast of London where the royal family has a country residence. After the service, 150 onlookers applauded as she returned to her car for the drive back to Sandringham House with her daughter, Queen Elizabeth II, whose left arm injured in a riding accident two weeks ago, was in a sling. Mary Relf, a regular royal watcher, was among the crowd delighted to see the Queen Mother again, she said.

Minister hopes to avoid closing Pompidou centre

PARIS (R) — Culture Minister Jacques Toubon says he hopes to avoid a complete closure of Paris's Georges Pompidou Modern Art Centre — one of France's most visited tourist attractions — for urgently needed renovation work. Mr. Toubon told a television interviewer Sunday night that technical experts had recommended closing the futuristic steel and glass cultural centre in central Paris for up to 18 months to speed up essential repairs. But he said he favoured spreading out the work over a longer period and closing only one section at a time. The centre, which opened 17 years ago, receives eight million visitors a year. Air conditioning systems and escalators particularly are showing signs of wear and need replacing. Officials said a decision would be taken in March that could result in full or partial closure. They told reporters total cost of the repairs could reach 400 million francs (\$70 million). The Pompidou centre houses France's Museum of Modern Art, with a superb permanent collection of 20th century works, and is the venue for major exhibitions of contemporary artists. It also contains libraries and workshops.

Man posts letters, diverts prince's motorcade

LAUNCESTON, Australia (AFP) — A man placed a bundle of letters in a post box here and forced police to divert Prince Charles' motorcade, police said Monday. The man started a bomb scare Sunday by placing the letters in a post box on the prince's route when the royal limousine was only two minutes away, the spokesman said. Police in this island state of Tasmania said they decided not to take any risks and diverted Prince Charles' route. Only to discover the suspect bomb was a bundle of letters. "It had to be checked out," said Detective Inspector Graham Hickey. "After the man was seen putting something in the mailbox, the prince's route was diverted and it all went smoothly. The contents of the mailbox were inspected almost immediately." On Jan. 26, a man fired a starting pistol and longed towards Prince Charles as he prepared to address thousands of people during Australia Day celebrations at Sydney's Darling Harbour Complex. The prince was unharmed.

Belgian minister sues for libel

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes announced Sunday he was suing a Flemish newspaper for libel for claiming that he had negotiated backhanders from the Italian helicopter firm Agusta. The paper, Het Laatste Nieuws (The Latest News), said Mr. Claes negotiated the bribes when Agusta was selling military helicopters to Belgium in 1988. Mr. Claes told the Dutch-language station BRIN that the accusations were "utter journalism" and an affront to his honour. "I'm sick of it," he said. "I was never approached over this business, and no one has ever made me a dishonest proposal."